

THE HOUSE OF APARTHEID MARQ de VILLIERS

THE NATION

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LETTERS

real war on poverty

New York City

DEAR SIR: Charles Schottland's article, "The Hungry Can't Wait" [*The Nation*, May 22], was badly needed and very timely. Professor Schottland's call for compulsory federal standards with respect to the levels of public assistance grants is far more meaningful for the poor, I believe, than Cloward's cries ["Birth of a Movement," *The Nation*, May 8] to break the system with more and more recipients. While I suppose the two approaches are not contradictory, it is my contention that the emphasis should be placed on increased public assistance grants; a renewed national campaign for mandatory federal standards should be initiated. This will be a genuine "war on poverty!"

Edward Perlmutter, *Treasurer-Legislative Rep.
Social Service Employees Union*

Pulitzer second guesses

Louisville, Ky.

DEAR SIR: I write as a member of the Advisory Board on the Pulitzer Prizes. I agree with your editorial of May 15 that Harrison Salisbury should have won this year's Pulitzer Prize for international reporting. As I have publicly stated, I spoke for and voted for his submission in the board meeting. . . . The editorial suggests that jurors should refuse to serve if their recommendations are subjected to "bureaucratic review." But a review of jury findings is the stated function of the Advisory Board, under the will of Joseph Pulitzer. He directed that "the selection of the persons who receive prizes or scholarships shall be under its (the board's) control so long as it continues in existence." If the function of the Advisory Board were simply to rubber-stamp the opinions of the majority of jurors in each category, what would be the point of its existence?

The Advisory Board is a continuing body, whose members serve for a maximum of twelve years. Jurors in the various categories are selected for one year only. I would not defend the wisdom of some majority votes in the Advisory Board, but I feel that critics of the Pulitzer Prizes should have a clear understanding of the procedures established by the founder.

Barry Bingham

the plan

St. Petersburg, Fla.

DEAR SIR: Sorry, but I cannot agree with your conclusion, "we have no policy," in your editorial "More Escalation—Why?" [May 8]. We do have a policy, that is, the Establishment has. It is a U.S. domination of the world. This is the meaning of the Truman Doctrine. And it was adopted almost immediately upon the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

I was told early in February, 1945, by a senior officer in the U.S. Air Force that the Japanese were seeking terms of surrender which would spare the Emperor's life; otherwise the terms of unconditional surrender were acceptable. This was confirmed a few days later by the U.S. admiral in command of our Pacific Submarine Fleet based on Fremantle, Australia.

The bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not necessary. They were not the last bombs of World War II but the first bombs of World War III. This is all made quite clear in Gar Alperovitz's outstanding book: *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*, Simon & Schuster, 1965. . . . The present Washington Administration did not just stumble into war in Vietnam—it was deliberately planned.

Hugh B. Hester, *Brig. Gen., U.S. Army (Ret.)*

EDITORIALS

The Dual Crisis

The chances are that if the Johnson Administration had not got the United States so deeply involved in Southeast Asia the crisis in the Middle East would not have blown up to its present menacing proportion. The Arabs would have been more cautious; the Russians would have had more incentive to continue trying to relax tensions with the United States, and less incentive to maneuver us into war on two fronts—an unpleasant prospect for even the foremost military power in the world, and the more so when the two battlegrounds are separated by some 85 degrees of longitude.

In diplomacy, the consequences of a single major blunder can be disastrous. We fought where there was no commitment forcing us to fight and where even consideration, both moral and material, should have dissuaded us from fighting. We are not necessarily committed to fight in the Middle East, but there we have both large material interests and an obligation to maintain the peace. But how are we to make good on this obligation when we are up to our ears in a wretched war on the other side of the world—one which, according to Gen. Lewis Walt, who was recalled recently, will involve us in ten or fifteen years of fighting and "pacification"? Modern times have not witnessed such a fantastic course of self-stultification on the part of a great power.

Had Mr. Johnson been honest, we would not be in our present unenviable position. In 1964, he told the electorate that we must be prudent in Asia and that the war in Vietnam should be fought by Asians, not by Americans. The votes had hardly been counted when he reversed himself. Perhaps events in the Middle East could not have been predicted, but with all the sources of information open to them it is a fair assumption that Mr. Johnson and Mr. Rusk might have considered the possibility that, sooner or later, an adventurer like Nasser would take advantage of our predicament. They must regret, now, that they did not seize one of the numerous opportunities of the past two years to extricate themselves from their self-built, self-baited trap in Vietnam.

The Russians may or may not have instigated the aggressive action by the Syrian wild men and Nasser, with which the other Arab states, willingly or otherwise, have gone along, but it is an excellent counter to our aggression in Vietnam. Diplomacy is a brutal business, and Soviet variety is no more edifying than anyone else's. Reports in the Canadian press and elsewhere give further credence to the belief that the United States was planning to invade North Vietnam by land. We may still do so, but the Middle East situation makes such a venture look increasingly desperate. The Soviets are determined not to allow us to crush the North Vietnamese and Vietcong. It looks as if they now have us in a position

whether managed by them or merely used for their ends (probably it was a combination of the two), to force us to back down either in Southeast Asia or in the Middle East. Face-saving ways may be found for doing this; if so, we shall be fortunate.

The one flicker of hope in the whole gloomy picture is that the Russians are no more omnipotent than we, and probably have no more desire than we to fight in the Middle East, much less to induce a nuclear confrontation. If we wish to restore some sort of stability in the Middle East, we must do business with the Russians. Joint Soviet-U.S. action is as imperative now as it was at the time of Suez eleven years ago. Working together, without amity but in pursuit of their different aims, America and Russia can settle matters East and West with only normal hazard and difficulty. Working against each other, they can easily lose control of the two situations which, whether we like it or not, are now interlinked.

For the moment the Soviets have the advantage, because we have been stupid, but the essence of retrieving one's blunders is to recognize them and to learn from events. Whether the President's trip to Canada had any connection with such a plan remains to be seen. As a member of the International Control Commission for Vietnam, and the originator or transmitter of several peace feelers, Canada could act as a broker between the participants in the present crisis. Perhaps this possibility attracts Mr. Johnson more now than it would have done a few weeks ago. If so, the dual crisis may provide a dual solution.

sermon, Extempore

One of the troubles with TV news is its evanescence, which no amount of skill or dedication on the part of the broadcasting organization can cure. You see some scenes, you hear some words, and before you can make up your mind what they mean, they're gone. Often you don't quite remember what you heard or if you heard correctly.

Such was our experience in listening to a C.B.S. broadcast on May 22, but in this instance the network courteously furnished us with a transcript of the part of Walter Cronkite's evening news program that had begun to interest us. It featured an interview by John Hart, a C.B.S. newsmen in South Vietnam, with two U.S. soldiers, SP/4 Marvin Schultz and Pfc. Clifford Rountree. They were two of eight Americans, out of thirty, who had survived an attack that overran their position. They played dead, and either the enemy were fooled or, possibly, they spared these Americans. Atrocities may be more common, but sometimes soldiers act as if they were human. In any case, hear Pfc. Rountree:

There was one time I couldn't hold my breath any longer. I had to breathe a little bit, and they noticed this, so they pulled the back of my shirt up, put their hands on me right here and—to see if I was breath-

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ing—they held it there for the longest time, it seemed. Just before I couldn't hold it any longer, they took their hand away, and it wasn't too long after that before they left.

SP/4 SCHULTZ: I don't know why they didn't shoot us. We didn't have any blood on us or anything, the two of us. Just like God put his hand over both of us. . . .

HART: How do you feel about this war now?

ROUNTREE: Well, my one thought is that it isn't so much the, the laws or the agreements or anything that's going to come out of it, it's—it has to be a will inside, in the hearts of both sides. Ho Chi Minh and our side. We both want peace. I think this war is too costly. Both of us have a motive of living in peace, helping each other, as far as food, everything goes, and forget this war and everything, and as far as the whole world goes, if everybody's—we've got enough problems with disease and everything to keep us real busy for a long time, just helping each other, without shooting each other.

HART: You two don't speak with hate.

ROUNTREE: No, I can't say I hate anybody. I was doing my job and I guess they were doing theirs; that's what war is like. You'd be a fool to hate; you're only cheating yourself when you hate something.

After what they had been through, these two soldiers might have been excused for hating the enemy. They are not philosophers or psychologists, and it would be understandable if they hated the war protesters back home. Yet if there was need for a Memorial Day sermon, coming from those with the best right to deliver it, there it was on TV—on the air for a few seconds, and no doubt forgotten by Memorial Day.

The Colonels Endure

Immediately after the Greek coup it was being said that the colonels could not last. They represented no significant group in Greece, not even the conservatives and royalists, they lacked a dominant personality, they showed no gift for public relations, and they were not getting along among themselves. Their lease of power was deemed to be short, and speculation centered on how the rule of parliament would most readily be restored.

Now it is not so certain. The junta has held Greece for almost two months and time seems to be working in its favor. The countries of the West made their protests, and these were not heeded. The United States has threatened to withhold military aid, but the colonels have only to look at the history of Latin America over the past decade to quiet their alarm on that score. Washington *always* threatens to cut off arms when a military dictator seizes power, but then rumors proliferate of Communists in the hills and the flow of munitions begins again for the "Western-oriented" strong man.

The Greek colonels may not be very polished brigands but they are smart enough to keep their fists out of sight. No blood has run where it could be seen. It is true that the body of Jikiforos Mandelaras was washed up on the shore of Rhodes, but the corpse of this bold young lawyer

does not speak. Reports assure us that the Acropolis still stands and that the squares of Athens look about as always—with perhaps a tank stationed here and there. In the taverns and coffee shops the men do not talk politics—and for Greeks such reticence is unusual—but that is about the only difference.

But that, of course, is the whole difference. The Greeks have lost their freedom, petty military men rule their lives, thousands of honest citizens are locked up in jail promises to restore at least some vestiges of a constitution are obviously insincere, and the Parthenon stand not as a symbol but as a mockery.

The West doesn't like it, but the West is preoccupied elsewhere. Vietnam and the Gulf of Aqaba loom in our foreground; Greece threatens no one except the Greeks. The junta settles down like a great slug on the land.

But matters will not rest there. The Greeks will not tolerate the colonels indefinitely; they will indeed take to the hills and violence will ensue. Then Greece may become yet another massacre ground of the cold war. It is not necessary; we can apply such economic pressure on these upstarts that they will have to give way. This is no case for intervention; it is not even a case for parading gunboats in the Aegean. Our money, NATO money made these colonels what they are today; without our money they will have to go back to barracks. A little firm attention is all that is required.

The Expeditors

Los Angeles

Better speak of a rope in the house of a man who has been hanged than mention the word "expedite" around City Hall today. Expeditors expedite, and in Los Angeles they have been expediting zoning change so effectively that the city's master plan has been reduced to a bizarre model of frustration for professional planners.

It's not much different now than it has always been except that the *Los Angeles Times* has been poking around the scattered ruins of the city's rapidly developing San Fernando Valley and has come to a late, but nevertheless true, realization that so many gasoline stations, hamburger drive-ins, and apartment house complexes couldn't have evolved by themselves. There has to be a creative force, some great design—and there the *Times* has been telling its 850,000 readers. That design was worked out by the City Council, the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Adjustments and the expeditors, who travel many paths, each according to his own vision, on the road to City Hall.

The expeditors have a mission: to frustrate the master plan, which is supposed to stop urban sprawl over 450 square miles of the city of Los Angeles by bringing some sort of rational order to future development. The city agencies have a mission: to guard the master plan. But the guardians have been getting their roles confused. A human weakness explained by the close comrades

between real estate developers and members of official zoning boards. Four planning commissioners have business connections with developers. The mother of one commissioner got property re-zoned for a gasoline station. Land developers and expeditors have been appointed to agencies with jurisdiction over zoning. One planning commission member was known around City Hall before his appointment as "Mr. Standard Oil" for his success in acquiring sites for the company. Since his appointment several years ago, his old friends have obtained sixteen zone changes for service stations.

Among the complaints against Mayor Samuel W. Yorty, none can be found accusing him of hostility to business. Yorty believes that a landowner "has a constitutional right to develop his property as long as he doesn't hurt his neighbor." Yorty's appointees have been following that philosophy with an exuberance that would appall Adam Smith.

Big money rides on zoning changes. In the current trial of one developer on charges of grand theft and conspiracy to commit bribery, a witness said that land bought at \$15,000 an acre was appraised at \$37,000 an acre immediately after the City Council granted a zoning change. It is evident that fees paid to expeditors are not wasted.

Hope long deferred, and seldom fulfilled, is the occupational misfortune of the professionals of city planning, whose decisions are often upset by the arbitrary action of political appointees. Huber E. Smutz, Los Angeles zoning administrator, says: "The record shows that the Board [of Zoning Adjustment] has granted almost every appeal handled by certain well-known expeditors."

Former Mayor Fletcher Bowron, who routed the corrupt Shaw regime back in the late '30s, has come in from the cold to head a citizens committee of inquiry to the mess. Bowron is conservative, 80 years old, still frisky, and a ruddy-cheeked, white-haired symbol of public rectitude. Occasionally, these old-fashioned peps are useful. New Yorkers will remember Judge Sabury.

Commencement '67

The graduates of our great universities this June will miss the Godspeed of our leading statesmen. President Johnson, Mr. McNamara and Mr. Rusk will not don cap and gown and provide lifelong inspiration for fortunate student bodies. The blow, however, should not be too severe. All the graduates need do is go through the papers of a year ago and make a few notes. No one in the Johnson Administration, from the President down, has anything new to say.

A practical reason for the absence of these luminaries is that repetition of even old stuff has become dangerous for all concerned. "Leading Johnson Administration figures," Andrew J. Glass writes in *The Washington Post*, "and the Nation's more prominent universities intend to keep a wary distance between each other when the Class of '67 graduates. . . ." University spokesmen, understandably reluctant to have their names used, say that they have problems enough without the necessity of calling on the campus cops to protect the honored guests against catcalls, death masks, shouts of "Murderer!" and other manifestations of negative esteem. Of course, if Mr. Johnson wants one desperately enough he can get an invitation, and he may decide that not to speak at even one commencement would entail an intolerable loss of face. Mr. Rusk has been a little more popular, but his invitations have come from Southern schools, where, as a Southerner born and bred, he is not likely to be insulted. He has, in fact, spoken at a convocation at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Tex., and he blessed the installation of a new president at Erskine College in Due West, S.C. His lecture at Cornell was an academic disaster and may have played a part in the current estrangement.

An exception to the tacit boycott is Vice President Humphrey, who is reported to have accumulated more than 100 invitations. None of the schools, however, is well known outside its neighborhood. Mr. Humphrey's sole scheduled appearance at a top-flight institution is at the U.S. Naval Academy. He will be safe there.

THE HOUSE OF APARTHEID

ARQ de VILLIERS

Arq de Villiers is a South African journalist whose family has a distinguished journalistic tradition in the Union of South Africa.

Capetown

William Styron once wrote, in another context and of another color, of "a water-pale man at the bottom of a pool, endlessly screaming." It could serve in South Africa too, if it is difficult—impossible—for the man who bears the

brunt of apartheid (the black man) to make his voice heard.

And now our government is mouthing the words "separate freedoms" as its new euphemism, and has decided that the superego of apartheid needs a new image: separate but equal is the rallying cry.

There is little overt violence here. Since the massacre of Sharpeville there has been no Watts. All is quiet. And ordinary personal human relationships across the color line (where they are possible) are astonishingly tranquil.

But I recall a comment on civil rights I heard in New York: "They're selling us bargain-basement human rights at Fifth Avenue prices. Lines that have been selling for years elsewhere have just come on to the market here." In South Africa there is no market at all: that daemon apartheid has stripped the stores, prompted, it is claimed, by the ogre of communism.

The daily press, which largely ignores these things, still uses little items which show more clearly than most the way white skins feel about black. A few examples, culled from the papers of a recent week:

¶ The traffic cop who chained a colored street vendor to a lamppost for two hours because he was too busy directing rush-hour traffic to be able to take his prisoner to the station. The man was finally charged with vending without a permit.

¶ The well-known "liberal" who asked when he hired a new servant: "What do you think they eat?"

¶ The butchers in town who advertise, as special bargains, both dogs' meat and boys' meat—"boys" being African servants of whatever age.

Underneath, daily, hourly, despite the vast material improvement our government has given "them," murder hurts; murder in James Baldwin's sense, for men (and children too) must suffer insults, hurt, shame, degradation—and they dare not do anything but smile.

These things are not part of apartheid's theoretical scheme—they are even frowned on now as negating the government's determination to give, through propaganda, a "correct" impression of the country; yet they are the soil in which human relationships must germinate. They are the Id of the Ego called Separate Development—apartheid. And that is part of our special blindness: that we whites are already so divorced from contact with other colors who share our country that we can see only apartheid's superego, where it is philosophy and dialectic, and is called (and believed to be) separate freedoms. While the Africans who suffer from it feel only the Id, where apartheid is *baasskap* (domination) still. It is a society as schizophrenic as Verwoerd's assassin, Dimitrio Tsafendas: white South Africa feels itself as normal as a parliamentary messenger; black South Africa feels the snake that lived in the belly of the assassin to torment him.

The House of Apartheid has three foundations: the Group Areas Act, which spells out where people must live and work and make love; the Influx Control regulations, which enforce the purification of those areas declared white; and the Population Registration Act, which divides people into racial types, forbids contact, and allows for the settling of "doubtful" cases by "inspection and environmental investigation."

A "group area" is a place (which could be anything from a public toilet to a county) set apart for the exclusive use of any one race. To make it work, of course, people had to be rigidly classified into racial types. So far we have only four (white, Bantu, colored and Asiatic) but legislation has already been promised to divide the colored group into seven subsections.

The Race Classification Appeal Board was given the hideous duty of deciding contested cases. As its chair-

man, Magistrate A.E. Burger, said at the start of a typical case:

If, according to the Act, the board finds that the persons concerned are obviously white in appearance, then all it will still have to do will be to further satisfy itself that they are not generally accepted as colored persons.

The board will call upon the two parties to come up to the table and will then satisfy itself as to the appearance of the parties. Then the board will adjourn to consider the matter, and it will then reassemble to announce its findings.

If the board, however, finds that they are not obviously white in appearance, then, provided they are not obviously nonwhite persons, the board will have to investigate the matter in order to satisfy itself that they are persons who are generally accepted as white.

This further examination involves the meticulous probing of their lives, their associations, the shadings of the children, the boy friends of their daughters, the opinion of their friends, as if they had committed some ghastly and secret crime.

Because appearance and associations are the criterion and because a change in classification means a revolution in a way of life, heartbreaking scenes have become commonplace.

An example was little Sandra Laing, 11-year-old daughter of a white couple in the Transvaal. The interminister, acting after complaints, classified her as colored. So the bewildered child was fetched from the classroom by a policeman and the head teacher, and escorted home. And this simply because a race-crazed government is determined to purify the (white) nation and, in the words of Capetown's deputy mayor, "because I do not want this country to go black." The fact that three-quarters of it is already black seems not to have registered.

But white people do not appear to feel the savage simmering below the farce. Listen to the cross-examination of the employer of a man applying for reclassification as white:

Q. Have you any separate toilet facilities at your management?

A. Yes, separate for Europeans (whites) and non-Europeans.

Q. Now which of these are being used by Mr. X?

A. He uses the European one.

Q. Did you see him there or did he tell you?

A. No I have seen him there.

Q. You actually saw him?

A. I have seen him going in and coming out.

Q. Didn't any of the other white people employed at your firm as far as you know pass any remarks as to his appearance?

A. Not a thing.

Q. They are quite prepared to allow this man to enter the same toilet?

A. Yes.

Or, from the same case, the cross-examination of a white woman friend of the petitioner and his family:

Q. Did [your children] play with Mrs. X's daughter?

A. Yes.

Q. I am talking of the time when she was still school. Did she play with them?

A. She did play with them.

Q. You are classified as white, didn't your children ever tell you that Mr. and Mrs. X's daughter was attending a colored school?

A. They are too young to know anything like that.

Q. Your children never made any enquiries about that?

A. My eldest daughter is only five years old.

Once you have identified your colored people, the thing to do is move them out of the white cities into new and barren barracks-like townships, near enough so that their labor can still be useful. This happened, for instance, to Christine and Seyster Janey, who would today be living out their lives in contented obscurity were it not for two things: first, an Act of God, the color of their skins and, second, an Act of Parliament, group areas.

Mrs. Janey's family had lived in a small cottage nesting under Table Mountain in the Capetown suburb of Jewlands for more than 150 years. Her mother was born in it and so was she. She continued to live in it after her marriage to Seyster more than forty-seven years ago. Four years ago she was 70, he 69. He worked as an elevator



erator, earning \$20 a week. They had many friends, but safe and happy in a large circle of relatives. The prospect of old age held no fears.

Says Mrs. Janey, sadly: "We had a lovely garden too, a gentleman, full of flowers and shrubs in the front and back: japonicas, hydrangeas, vines, loquats, guavas, azaleas, roses, all planted by ourselves."

But suddenly, four years ago, the Janey family was moved to Bonteheuwel, a new town, a colored town, a group area, a barren spawning of the mother city, 10 miles out of town. And now that those four years have gone they are just waiting, waiting to die. Their health has been shaken by the move and by the terror of the *skollies* (dogs) that hold the overcrowded township in a bully's grip. They no longer go out of doors; nothing will ever grow in the sand that drifts around their house. Their happy life is finished before its time; because, they were white, they were colored.

Bonteheuwel holds 45,000 people where seven years ago it held none. Multiply Mrs. Janey by 45,000 heartbreaks and you have Bonteheuwel. Multiply Bonteheuwel by Lavis, Langa, Guguletu, Nyanga, and you have a further measure. Multiply these "townships" of Capetown by those of other cities, other provinces, and there you have one measure of the Group Areas Act, one of the instruments of Separate Freedoms.

For the Africans it is even worse; not for them dusty ghettos permitted to the colored on the fringes of the cities, not any more. They must go back "home."

Part of the principle of Influx Control (it is a euphemism for the refusal to allow black Africans into the so-called white cities) is a procedure called "endorsing out," which means forcibly shipping back to the reserves many who are already in those cities. Occasionally more revealing official terminology is used, like the expression by Mr. Blaar Coetzee, deputy minister of Bantu development and administration, who talked of the government's determination to effect the *gesuiwering* (purification) of the white areas.

This purification has never worked before, probably because the government has never really thought through to a final solution. Black ghettos near white cities keep growing. Industry, after all, needs labor.

But in December, 1966, Mr. Coetzee warned industrialists that they would, starting now, have to reduce their African labor force by 5 per cent a year. And in a letter blocking the establishment of a new industrial township in Capetown, Mr. Coetzee's department said:

The application is opposed by this department because it would cause the influx of a large number of Bantu into the western Cape should the industrialists insist on Bantu labor and allege that colored labor is not available. Such a position would tend to create a state of affairs in conflict with official policy.

It is impossible for a nonofficial observer to find out how many Africans are being "endorsed out." Only in the case of a friend, or an employee of a friend (when the name is known), is it possible to trace. Many people don't bother. There are plenty of servants.

Then there are the people who are banished rather than just sent, to their "homelands"; their names appear on the public record. There are hundreds of them, banned under that South African catchall, the Suppression of Communism Act, for suspected subversive activities and confined to a magisterial district in the segregated reserves.

One unfortunate from Capetown, a garage mechanic in the city for twenty-two years, was banished, after serving his prison sentence, to a rural area in the Transkei, some 30 miles from the nearest garage. He has no job and no money—not even those who would like to help him know how he keeps himself and his family alive. Newspapers are forbidden to publicize his case: banned people are unpeople and so unquotable. He must report to the nearest police station—30 miles away—once a month. Having no money for the bus, he walks.

It is also possible, though difficult, to trace the people who appear in the many Bantu criminal courts around the country. They are the ones who have committed the

criminal offenses of being without jobs, or homes, or proper papers, or who have failed to register themselves with the authorities. They are fined or jailed before being sent "home."

A diary of one morning session at Bantu Criminal Court in the Capetown suburb of Observatory gives some idea of how the system actually works: (Note: those found guilty in this court have not only to pay their fines or go to jail but are almost invariably ejected from the cities.)

10.00 A.M.: The witnesses and some of the accused, who have been munching oranges on the lawns outside, file into the court. The prosecutor and interpreter stroll in shortly. Then a couple of policemen, hitting each other with rulers. At 10.15 the court is still.

10.30 A.M.: The magistrate, a dumpy man with sharp blue eyes, enters. The court shuffles to its feet, subsides.

10.42 A.M.: The eleventh case is called. In the first ten there were no witnesses, no testimony. One minute and a few seconds each. The eleventh case is a woman from the Transkei reserve, who was picked up by the police. She had her pass ("reference book"), but had failed to register with the authorities within the required seventy-two hours. Africans *must* register. Influx control. We'll never get them out of the cities otherwise. Why did she come to Capetown? "To seek my man," she says. The magistrate sighs. Five *rand* (about \$7) or fifteen days. Next case please.

10.45 A.M.: It goes on. The magistrate concedes where he can, but the law is specific: no pass, an offense; no registration, an offense; no job, an offense; no home, an offense. Mabel Maselane is called. Her case is more difficult since she wants her mother to appear as a witness. She had a defense lawyer (the only accused who did) but fell out with him over his fees. He withdrew.

Mabel lived with her husband in Capetown from May, 1956, to February, 1960. Between that date and September, 1966, there is no record of her—a thing for concern, this. Now she says her husband is living with another woman and wants to get her back to the Transkei. That, she explains, is why she's in court; she is not allowed to live in Capetown alone. There are a few confused moments: the court cannot understand why her husband, who lives in an area controlled by the Cape Province, is allowed to work in the Capetown municipal area. Surely this is wrong? An official explains that this is a temporary "gentleman's agreement" between the two bodies which will soon be put right.

Mabel's case is adjourned when she insists she wants her mother to testify. "All right, but you'd better have a medical certificate if she's not here," says the prosecutor.

11.05 A.M.: More of the same follows; all deal with illegal entry into white cities, or failing to register within seventy-two hours. Ten *rand* or thirty days is the standard sentence; a *well-paid* African gets about 30 *rand* a month.

11.30 A.M.: Thirty-two cases in the first hour. The prosecutor is beginning to mumble the charges; it doesn't matter since the interpreter knows the wording by rote. The interpreter, a large man with handsome teeth, has a fluent and resonant voice. No trouble hearing him. A young man is called, his hands shaking in nervousness.

He admits he has never had a pass, though he was born in the city and can thus stay. "Ten *rand* or thirty days" says the magistrate. "It's even easier to have documents if you live here. Next case."

11.53 A.M.: A man from the ghetto called Lang (where Capetown Africans must live) briefly disturbs the even flow. In recognition of the break in pattern the crowd shuffles and shifts on the hard wooden benches. A baby squalls and the woman who was suckling it gets up hastily and leaves court. The man is accused of hospitalizing he put a friend up for the night without permission. He pleads guilty and is fined 4 *rand* or fifteen days. His case took exactly twenty-seven seconds.

11.53.27 A.M.: The pattern resumes and the court swings back into rhythm; one man chose to pay his fine at the bench, and solemnly tipped coins from a large wallet in front of the clerk. He was still busy when the next case finished and the third accused walked toward the dock. The first and third walked out together.

11.55 A.M.: A man from the town of Mossel Bay says he came to Capetown with his *baas* (master). "But he didn't tell me I needed a book," he said. "But the law is to tell you, not your *baas*," said the prosecutor with some asperity. This, after all, was the forty-ninth case of the morning.

11.57 A.M.: Still the same charges, still people being sent back "home." Only minor offenses are dealt with in this court. "Seldom anything exciting happens here," a large gravel-voiced policeman has explained before court opened. "Only things on a low level of importance."

12.02 P.M.: One and a half hours and fifty-two cases have passed. More than forty of them sent from the city that was their home. A man is called who clutched his right ear. His *baas* brought him to Capetown to a doctor, dropped him and went off with his pass, he complains. "Aaaagh, don't come here making up stories," claims the prosecutor. "Ten *rand* or thirty days," says the magistrate.

12.36 P.M.: The pile of green and pink dockets in the "in" basket is growing smaller now. One man produces a sheaf of papers which he says represents his authority for working in Capetown. The prosecutor ignores them. "The reference book is the authority and it says nothing about allowing you to work here," he says. He pushes the papers aside without looking at them. "Ten *rand* or thirty days," says the magistrate. The man picks up his usual papers and empty pass and leaves the court.

12.44 P.M.: A lad appears in the dock. This is the case. He too was arrested without papers; but he explains he was born in 1952 (Africans under 16 are not obliged to carry passes). At the prosecutor's urging, the interpreter examines the boy's teeth, pushing his chin up for a good look. He shakes his head at the prosecutor, shrugs at the magistrate. The boy is led away without charge. No doubt he must try to explain to his parents where he has been and why he was in jail overnight.

12.46 P.M.: Eighty-four cases have gone and the court adjourns for lunch. It's raining outside and on the playing field opposite the court a man is scurrying for cover. The wind is getting up too. Not a good day. But a bad day's work; the city is just a little purer now.

There Must Have Been Easier Wars

ESMOND SMITH

Mr. Smith, a frequent contributor to The Nation, has recently returned from a stay of two and a half months in Vietnam. This was his second trip there, on assignment from an American television network.

We took off from Tan Son Nhut, Saigon's airport, at midday, in a burning haze. We flew a whistle-stop course, landing at Pleiku, Qui Nhon and finally at An Khe, headquarters of the First Air Cavalry Division. The flight takes most of the afternoon, though the actual distance is only a few hundred miles. The plane, a C-130, as bare inside as a skeleton, carries cargo as well as passengers. A young sergeant, wearing a purple scarf, sat across from us, crisscrossed between two South Vietnamese soldiers who were loaded down with PX supplies. The sergeant was carrying a primitive wooden crossbow. I asked him whether his weapon was a VC souvenir.

"Not exactly."

"How's that again?"

"Well I guess they might have used them at one time. In these days they use Chicom grenades and Russian rockets, and they sell the crossbows in Pleiku."

After Qui Nhon the countryside becomes more hilly. We are in the Central Highlands; rivers shining like silver threads lead into the greenest of valleys. The airstrip at An Khe, as we looked down, was bulldozed out of the top of a hill. Banking steeply, the C-130 sideslipped onto the metal runway, jouncing to a bone-rattling stop without shutting down power. Out of a blinding cloud of red dust met me Major Jones, the First Cav's PIO (public information officer). "Welcome to the war!" he yelled.

As we drive along a service road littered with the carcasses of wrecked helicopters, Adam Raphael of CBS nudges my elbow and points to a set of Burma-style signs along the curve of the dirt road:

Charlie used to be here and mean
until he met the First Airmobile Team

The First Cav love their war. Basically it is Indians and cavalry spread over an AO (area of operations) of some 100 square kilometers (called "clicks" by the briefing officer). The big survey map is covered with clear plastic and brilliantly marked in colored crayons. The map has been Americanized. "The Crotch" represents a group of camps at the northern point of the First Cav's AO; "The Santa Fe Trail" represents a line along the First Cav's northernmost boundary. In between on the battle map are such names as the Oregon Trail, the Fish-Hook, and a whole rash of red-crayoned LZs (landing zones)—Two, Three, English, Pony, Pistol, Hump, Grief, Turkey, Santa, Soupy. And then there is the Bong-Son plain where we are at present located. According to the briefing, elements of a North Vietnamese regiment are all around us. In addition, this is the stamping ground of the Second

Regiment, a main-force outfit so hard to locate that it has been nicknamed the "Ghost Regiment" by the

First Cav. The logistics needed to keep the First Cav operational are simply staggering. Every few minutes Caribous and C-130s land with supplies from Cam Ranh Bay and Saigon. Yet even this air armada isn't enough; a 100-truck convoy from Qui Nhon daily rides up Route 19 under heavy guard.

Things must have been easier in other wars. I leave a briefing in Vietnam wondering aloud: "Are we surrounding the enemy or is the enemy surrounding us?"

From a briefing on how the First Cav "softened up" the Bong-Son plain preparatory to moving in:

"Three hundred and sixty-five air strikes."

"Yes."

"More than thirty ARCLIGHTS—that's code for B-52 strikes."

"Yes."

"And that was the start. Then we lobbed in better than a million shells."

"Yes."

"In between the air strikes we dumped more than a million psywar leaflets on the plain."

"Yes."

"Well, do you correspondents have any questions?"

"Well, only one. According to your handout, all you have captured so far in OPERATION PERSHING is thirty hand grenades, four rounds of large caliber ammunition, 3 tons of rice and 3 tons of salt."

"Sir?"

"It appears that you've leveled virtually every village and hamlet, killed or driven more than 50,000 peasants off the land with your firepower. My question is, how do you intend to go about winning the hearts and minds of these people?"

"I'm afraid you'll have to take that up with the S.5 sir, but jeeze, it's a real good question."

Imagine miles upon miles of emerald-green rice fields splattered with bomb craters; all the untended rice shoots growing up to the edges of craters. That was my first glimpse of the Bong-Son plain. From where we were standing, on LZ Santana, hills from 300 to 800 feet high surrounded us on every side. As far as the eye could see forward columns of blue smoke rose in the air. A deeply warm and human chaplain, Father Theodore Dowd, who hailed from Worcester, Mass., had invited us to spend a week traveling with him from company to company on the Bong-Son plain. So early next morning we had piled all our camera gear into the big Huey helicopter. While we made ourselves as comfortable as possible on the canvas seats—I noticed nobody fastened seat belts—the pilots tuned up their radios for a communications check. On either side of the open doors, the gunners fed belts of copper-sheathed bullets into their guns. There are two ways the copters fly over the Bong-Son plain, very high or very low. We flew low, skimming above the palm groves, dipping down to charge like an elephant across

the watery-green rice paddies, and soaring up just yards short of the tree line. The pilot was having trouble locating Captain Bernstein's beleaguered company—it had been hit badly the night before. Now as we skimmed over a burned-out village the pilot asked Bernstein to mark his position with smoke. Almost at once we saw the purple smoke billowing across the white sand in a hollow at the edge of the village. When we landed, the down draft from the rotors spewed up a 90-mile-an-hour sandstorm that completely enveloped the crouching GIs. Most of them had been without sleep for two nights and their faces were drawn and tired. The squad of soldiers seemed delighted to have a visit from the chaplain. In part, probably, this was because it meant that for the next hour they would get a break from the war; but the fact that Father Dowd was an outsider who obviously cared about them also had something to do with his welcome. Soon they had gathered into a semicircle, heads down in a prayer for the souls of those recently departed. Whatever one thought about this war, it was impossible not to feel an enormous sadness and sympathy for these young soldiers. It was almost inevitable that some of them were moving their lips in prayer for the last time.

During Mass patrols were out, and my thoughts were interrupted by Captain Bernstein who had given orders that a bunch of women walking along the tree line were to be brought in. "At the double," he yelled, adding as he walked over to the radio man on the slope, "We're not going to take any more casualties than we have to."

Now the women were brought over to where Bernstein was sitting.

"Search their baskets!"

The GIs opened up the baskets. In one of them was a tiny child who immediately began bawling his head off.

"Get Sergeant Han!"

Han, the Vietnamese irregular who traveled with the company, came running. For the next couple of hours the Captain interrogated each of the women. How many guerrillas does she have in her village? How long has she been a member of the Liberation Front? Every person that lives in this valley has worked willingly, or under compulsion, for the VC; what does she do for the VC? Where was her husband? All their husbands, the women

said, had gone to live on Route 1, away from the bombing and the Americans. None of them were members of the Liberation Front. Now Bernstein was sure the women were lying, that they were certain to be wives of local VC. He told the Sergeant to separate the women from one another and, holding the I.D. card of the first woman, he radioed her name to base. "X-Ray, Uniform, Alpha. November . . . break . . . Hotel, Alpha, November. Hotel, break . . . 37 years old . . . village Tan Qhon."

After a ten-minute wait, the answer came back: the woman's husband was positively identified as a member of the Second VC Regiment. "A hard-hat," said Bernstein, laconically. Hard-hat is GI slang for hard-core regular guerrillas. I asked what would happen to her.

"I'm going to call in a chopper, and send her back to LZ English," Bernstein said. "She's VC, and she's got information. We'll get it out of her somehow."

Now the woman, and her little bundle of child, were separated from the main group by Sergeant Han and led to the edge of the clearing. In an hour or so she would be taken away. Meanwhile she would sit in the punishing sun with a tag on her—"VCS": VC suspect.

"Don't film," said the young lieutenant, with smile. When we joined this particular company it was searching out a shattered hamlet near the village of Tan-An. It was almost time for a copter to arrive with hot food. A few GIs were cutting down coconuts and sipping the milk. The rest of the company was patrolling the hamlet perimeter. So we sat and watched the activity. The company had bivouacked in a coconut grove at the edge of the hamlet. The sandy ground was strewn with discarded C-ration packs, many of them unopened. Near the radio man sat the company commander, a captain. He was of medium build, with a lined face that reminded you of Humphrey Bogart in *Casablanca*; his dark eyes were set deep in their sockets and he had two days' stubble on his chin.

The lieutenant had been referring to the scene before us: A trooper was spraying insect repellent on human ear. There was no blood. It was quite small and brown and hairless.

"No sir," I said, "we won't film that."



But I was curious to know more about this ear fetish. I had often heard that though it was forbidden, the practice of clipping ears was widespread. A PIO back at An He had told us that the going rate for a VC ear among souvenir hunters was \$30. But that was just talk; this was the real thing. So I walked out of the coconut grove and across the paddy dike. There I saw my first atrocity. His head slumped against the bank, a look of agony frozen beneath the shock of black hair. Both ears had been severed at the root so all that remained were two lumpy circles about the size of 50c pieces. Someone had thrown a Pepsi-Cola can on the bank of the paddy and the red, white and blue container had come to rest on the boy's shoulder. He didn't look to have been more than 15. An impulse made me throw the can away. I remember thinking that this was the first time I'd ever seen the face of the enemy, and it was just a kid. Winning hearts and minds? I almost threw up at the thought.

The main characteristics of unit life on the Bong Son plain are death and dust. In the course of a typical day a company will be visited a dozen times by helicopters; you see them bringing the mail, ammunition, food, replacements; you see them taking away WIAs (wounded in action) and the awful black body bags with the KIAs (killed in action). But nothing really prepares the visitor for the dust. It is thick and red and choking. As the copter lands or takes off, great billowing clouds of the stuff leave you gasping for breath. Each soldier, the majority are in their teens, will spend an average of 30 days in the field.

On a tree at LZ Steel Helmet fluttered a flimsy piece of paper:

AMERICAN OFFICERS, NCO, SOLDIERS

Number US 501883508 my name is Luis Antonio Ortiz private E 3, Co D. Battalion 229, 1st Canbry [sic] Division. I was captured by Liberation Army December 27, 1966, in Nhan Tinh camps. I was good treated, I eat good food, drink mil [sic] I smoke cigarettes, I sleep good. Liberation Army explains for me lenient and humanitarian policy of National Front for Liberation. December 31, 1966.

Luis Antonio Ortiz

the village of Tan-Ah I found this:

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU G.I.?

MacNamara says Americans will have to accept casualties. And that means you, G.I.

You won't find him sweating in the jungle or going home in a coffin.

There aren't yet any bombs planted in the Pentagon.

Like there will be for you in your barracks, your base, or the local bar.

SO WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

Combat pay and a Purple Heart if you're one of the lucky ones.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS?

The Marines who don't come out of the jungle.

The pilots who don't make it back from their missions.

The guys who get hit in the Saigon, Danang, Chu Lai airports, etc.

Their combat pay doesn't do them much good.

When they go home in a box.

Better think it over, soldier.

There's not much in it for you.

Who is better at this game is a matter of opinion, but my own view is that the Liberation Front's psychological warfare is not nearly as good as its internal propaganda. Mind you, one wonders also about the American psywar effort. More than 45 million leaflets, I was told, were dropped over South Vietnam last year. They are made from a special paper that has a slow rate of descent. One aspect of psywar is the "Chieu Hoi" or Open Arms program which promises amnesty to every defector. The cost of these drops has so far averaged \$1,000 for every Chieu Hoi. Yet compared with the calculated cost of \$370,000 to kill a VC, this might be considered a bargain in the absurd mathematics of this bizarre conflict. A typical American leaflet shows a picture of a smiling peasant with the message:

WHY IS PHAN NHO SO HAPPY?

On the reverse side is the answer:

BECAUSE GREAT NEW PROGRESS IS COMING TO VIETNAM

Interestingly enough, there is no reference to *South Vietnam* in this message. The leaflet continues on a decided Madison Avenue note: "You too can share the exciting progress that is taking place in rural Vietnam and that has brought happiness and security to Phan Nho and his neighbors. Return now to the side of the GVN and join in the great work of transforming Vietnam."

I picked up that leaflet in the still-smoldering ruins of Hy-Van, where not a house or even a tree was standing.

The copter makes its way along the emerald-green plain, soaring quickly to hills splattered with bomb craters. We have to get out of the valley before dusk. "H&I" fire—harassment and interdiction in military jargon—is about to begin. The idea is to make it tough on Charlie during the long night ahead. Presently we come to LZ Two Bits. The copter skims low over the palm trees and lands. This is a forward base camp, big enough to take nearly 100 helicopters, and all around it, high and steep, rise the green hills. From a mess tent with open flaps we look out across this lovely valley. A smoky haze of evening fills up the valley and the sun, blood orange, seems to set the hills on fire; then, suddenly, it is dusk. There is ham steak, beans, caramel custard pudding for dinner. Against the purple hills flash the tracers of the camp's twin-eighties . . . boom, flash . . . we can see the bullets hit the hills with orange spurts.

"Mail going out," says a First Cav captain, walking back to his tent with an armful of free cigars and toothpaste from the Red Cross cartons next to the coffee urn. Don North, an A.B.C. correspondent, listens with me to some GIs talking together. "Hell," says a 19-year-old, talking about the war, "what burns me up is this craze for body counts. Like the last operation we were on. The Captain says, 'I'm calling for volunteers to go out and count bodies; I want two men.' No one stepped forward. He must have asked three or four times. Then he told us he would go by himself. About that time a guy called Walker volunteers. Then Walker's buddy, Jackson—a

kid with thirty-six days to go—steps out of line. They get up there, then the PAVN [People's Army of Vietnam] open up with everything they've got. We ended up the day with two more KIAs. I noticed that the Captain cried during the memorial service. You see these captains are bucking for major, and man, they've got to get those body counts. The thing is, Charlie won't ever give up those bodies."

Most GIs I spoke to had, and have, a very high regard for the Vietcong, especially the local guerrillas. "I've seen eight air strikes and nape called in on a village and, would you believe, old Charlie had the goddamnedest nerve to attack us that night!"

Says another soldier: "Down in the Delta, I've seen Charlie make 60 mm. mortars out of the axles of an old car. The VC have guts. I don't care about the PAVN, but you've got to take your hat off to Charlie."

"We sure lend them a big hand sometimes," a fourth GI says. "I mean I recall one nutty guy we had in our company. He was always playing the John Wayne scene. So this day we got pinned down in a rice paddy. We just had to get into the village before dark. We called the gunships in. Then we finally made the tree line. Well, as soon as we get into the village this nut races up to the 'hooch' that was giving us all the trouble. He takes a grenade, pulls the pin, and throws it through the window. Then he flattens himself against the wall! That was it—he hung it up right there, completely signed out. The wall blew out and you could have put what was left of him in a steel helmet. It wasn't funny, yet it sure looked funny. I mean how crazy can you get? That's the thing about Nam, we all play the game."

The enemy lives in a land few Americans have ever heard of called Nam-Bo—South Vietnam. From General Westmoreland down to Pfc. Jones, the Americans call him Victor Charlie, shorthand for Vietnamese Communist. Yet the term would puzzle most of them. When captured, they generally declare themselves to be members of the Dan Quan Du Kich, literally Guerrilla Popular Army. By far the greatest number of them are to be found at the hamlet level, where they operate in small bands, seldom more than twelve, usually in threes and sixes. Not surprisingly, the local population does not consider them to be soldiers. In the hamlet's eyes the typical *du kich* is a civilian and an insider. In the "sweep-and-destroy" operations currently being conducted by the First Cav around the Bong-Son plain, it is the Dan Quan Du Kich who form the persistent enemy. Booby traps, punji sticks, sniping, local reconnoitering, night attacks, are their main duties. There are two more plateaus in the Liberation Army: the Regionals (*Dai doi doc lap*) and Main Force (*Quan Doi Chu Luc*) or "hard-hats," so-called because of their fiberboard helmets. No member of the Liberation Army wears uniform or any distinguishing mark of rank.

One thing remarkable about the Liberation Army's logistics is that every unit is self-contained. By contrast with the U.S. Army's prodigious "tail" of support services, the motto of the Main Force units is *Tu Luc Canh Sinh*—"We Support Ourselves." When a guerrilla unit needs supplies, they don't requisition them; they plan an attack

on an enemy camp. ARVN units are especially vulnerable to this kind of attack. When the guerrillas need food they usually work for it. In fact most units have a double responsibility—for military action and for food production. What interested me about the Liberation Army was an American official's comment that "the typical Main Force unit or regional unit spends less than two days a month in combat. The rest of the month is spent in training, food production and agit-prop work." It is this "other war"—theirs, not ours, that holds the real clue to what is happening in Vietnam. For in moving into Vietnam, the United States Army is taking on both a social revolution and a social structure that are remote from the world described in training camp.

A typical Vietnamese village represents a collective work group and a self-sufficient economic unit. It is composed of the following: a village protection society; a village guild made up of carpenters, blacksmiths and other craftsmen; the elderly women's Buddhist association; the mutual-aid society, chiefly organized as a burial society. Yet all these associations are only the superstructure. The bedrock is the household. The nature of a Vietnamese village is such that normally a stranger can not go anywhere—in the rice fields, to the mud and thatch homes, Buddhist shrine, or even the local cock fight—without noticing that almost everything seems to be done on the family scale. A youthful Vietnamese told me: "In our country it is the *nha*—the household—not the individual that is counted in the census." The basic point is that after several lifetimes of subjugation by France, the Vietnamese are not about to give up the hamlet-level independence to another foreign invader.

To a certain extent the Americans in Saigon have always been divided on this issue. Roughly speaking, the civilians who managed the pacification program were pre-peasant, convinced, in the awful jargon of pacification that "winning hearts and minds" was more important than destroying them. The military on the other hand remember—endlessly, I'm afraid—Mao's analogy of the guerrilla living among the people as a fish in water. They have ferociously gone about removing, first the water then the people. The atmosphere in military circles in Saigon was joyful last month: with the reassignment of Deputy Ambassador Porter, the civilian-run pacification program was dead. Officers about to take over the program gave broad hints about the new "get-tough" line. "They don't love us, but their attitude is improving. With similar emphasis a tough prison officer in Alcatraz might so describe his charges."

So the war goes on. Like a buzzard, the olive green helicopter banked and wheeled over the burned-out village. Abruptly, the black-gloved pilot swung the copter into position for its approach. The rice field now wasn't more than 50 feet below our skids, and the downdraft from the rotors was flattening out the tall rice shoots. Hurriedly we jumped out, the pilot waiting no longer than it took for us to get from under the whirling blades then thrashed upward and raced away. As we walked through the tree line the destruction was such that it left us breathless and appalled. It was as though we were seeing an old war newsreel—Poland, 1939—only in color.

The village was a dust heap. The sienna-colored huts had been flattened by repeated air strikes. Trails of fresh blood splashed a crazy path among the broken coconut palms.

A top sergeant is busy emptying his back pack to make room for a mother-of-pearl Buddhist altar looted from the ruins. A baby carriage is lying in a heap of spent mortar cases. The earthworks of one of the village bunkers are littered with C-ration cans, spent ammunition, discarded copies of *Stars and Stripes* ("HO REJECTS JOHNSON PEACE OVERTURE"). A bulldozer heaves aside the one remaining wall of someone's home. On it is scrawled in English, "G.I. PLEASE DON'T BURN MY HOME!" "VC propaganda," mutters a GI. Another First Cav trooper is giving out black playing cards. On one side is a death's-head skull with paratrooper wings. Beneath this is the legend "Death From Above." The idea I am told is psywar at the company level. When Charlie returns to find his family dead, he is expected to get the message. The cards are stuck in dead mouths.

"What's the bulldozer doing here?" I asked.

"The captain is looking for rice and weapons—they've got to be buried somewhere!"

"What about the villagers?"

"Screw the villagers. Everyone here was VC."

That evening we are back at LZ English. In the brigade command post, Colonel Smith, commander of the First Cav's First Brigade, is listening to a run-down on the day's fighting. The unprepared outsider gets a chilling feeling that time and space are out of joint. It is utterly professional, utterly clinical. Under a bright light, a taut, slim officer wearing captain's bars is briskly outlining what we know about the enemy's movements in the past twenty-four hours. Hunched forward on wooden benches, the captains, majors and colonels listen intently. No clocks, no windows are visible anywhere in the dimness of the tent to remind one of the other world. Only gradually does the realization seep in that, on this quiet day, in spite of 400 helicopter sorties, an estimated 200 artillery rounds, an untold number of patrols, and a B-52 strike, the enemy had completely vanished. This, then, is the frustrating environment the U.S. Army has moved into. Guerrilla warfare is primary, and war of movement secondary," General Giap wrote in *People's War, People's Army*. Yet the war of movement is crucial to the First Cav. The "instant battle" is the helicopter cavalry's forte, but in this quicksilver war, the enemy refuses to fight save on his own terms.

As I leave the briefing I cannot stop thinking about the burned-out village. I go back and ask the intelligence officer about it. Here is the run-down. We took 3 KIAs. Their losses were unknown. After the fire fight the VC vanished, dragging their dead with them under cover of night. We evacuated all the women and children that were found in the bunkers. They are now in refugee camp. Finally we bulldozed the village flat.

A few weeks later I happened to pick up a column by Joseph Alsop headed, "The Battle For Binh Dinh." In the course of describing the action on the Bong-Son plain, the columnist describes the frightful carnage with parallel to a fox hunt, "in which the hounds are grimly illful and wonderfully swift," chasing a sneaky fox who keeps going to earth. An outsider who listens to a brief-



ing in the brigade command post would remark that the analogy was apposite. But somehow, Mr. Alsop managed to keep the horrifying realities of the burning homes, frightened peasants and crying children out of his article. It is a scandalous war that on one level is a kind of game to the men whose business is war.

I left Vietnam with a dozen notebooks crammed with impressions: Vietnam is the only place in the world where every horizon is a battlefield. In Vietnam, extraordinary Americans spend months rigging up a rural electrification scheme in a village, only to watch in horror as an A-4 Skyraider with Vietnamese air-force markings swoops down and drops 2,000 pounds of bombs on it. Saigon officials complain bitterly if an American MP tries to question a Vietnamese civilian. No visitor to the Bong-Son plain is likely to forget the streams of weeping refugees, but the Saigon government pays no attention to that problem. Vietnam this year will get more foreign aid from the United States than all of Latin America combined—it will also receive more bomb tonnage than was rained on Nazi Germany during World War II. In Vietnam it is entirely possible to watch the *Dean Martin Show* on Armed Forces TV in your foxhole. Also the "log" ships (logistics) disgorge complete luncheons—from roast turkey with giblet sauce to ice cream—for the fighting GIs. Vietnam is tragic, yes, but it also has its wildly absurd side.

The Americans are now the dominant element in the population of South Vietnam. They are both the masters and the rulers. They have denied effective political power to the National Liberation Front, and are fully aware of it. They are also the only source of energy for a "free" South Vietnam, which is to say, a South Vietnam without Communist participation. President Johnson proposes, General Westmoreland disposes. Thus, the Commander in Chief of American forces in Vietnam moves about the blazing countryside with the weight of a Legatus Augusti, in some ways the most extraordinary, certainly the most bizarre character of the war. Spare, pious, modest,

nonsmoking — who, more fittingly, could have been chosen to represent America's new Imperial Destiny? The French, obsessed as they were with keeping title to colonial assets, were always trying to demonstrate to General LeClerc that valor could prevail over a ragged army of peasants. The Americans, obsessed with the Communist menace, seek in General Westmoreland to persuade a skeptical America that might is right, even when the Vietnamese people so clearly refuse to recognize it.

As I checked out of the Hotel Caravelle nearly three months later, I glanced over at the television set and there on the screen was Henry Cabot Lodge, then Ambassador, nervously fingering his white suit, and saying something to the effect that as he looked forward into 1967 he would predict "sensational" military gains in the coming year. Pressed by the TV interviewer, he thought that war would eventually "fade out," once the allied pacification effort had made sufficient progress to convince Hanoi that "the jig is up." It was a wistful little performance and the few wealthy Vietnamese who congregate in the Caravelle's lounge clucked approvingly. With all the appearance of a proconsul vested with enormous authority, Henry Cabot Lodge had come to exercise none. Any individual commander, in practice, had more in-

fluence over Vietnamese affairs. In his day, Lodge provided a useful symbol; the Boston Brahmin with the touch of "cool"; that starched white suit, brown and white palm beach shoes; afternoons spent at Saigon's exclusive Cercle Sportif; those privileged "backgrounders" where the Ambassador addressed visiting VIPs on the situation in South Vietnam. Henry Cabot Lodge was an entirely appropriate choice for ambassador, managing with finesse to convey the peaceful intentions and solemn purpose of a disinterested Administration; while at the same time the White House escalated the war. It seemed to me appropriate that this solemn, humorless Bostonian, whose politics were so manifestly out of tune with 20th-century America, should have been chosen as the ranking apologist for the New Globalism of the Johnson Administration in revolutionary Vietnam.

From Tu Do Street came the sound of the Hondas and Lambrettas. Through the thermoplate windows, crisscrossed with masking tape, I could see flares lighting up the night sky across the Saigon River. The desk clerk shuffled around to the cashier's cage, counting the piasters with a deft touch. He looked at me inquiringly through the thick lenses of his glasses and said: "You will be returning, Mr. Smith?"

"I imagine so, M'sieur Qui; I imagine so."

Putting the Poor Out Of Business

MARK LEVY

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Since August, 1964, the Office of Economic Opportunity has been joined in an unlikely partnership with the Small Business Administration to fight poverty by lending money to poor people who want to go into business. The Economic Opportunity loans were authorized by Congress in Title IV of the legislation creating the OEO. Loans of up to \$25,000 at annual interest as low as 5.5 per cent for a maximum of fifteen years could be made "to assist the establishment, preservation, and strengthening of small business concerns and improve the managerial skills employed in such enterprises." The OEO was to establish Small Business Development Centers in thirty-eight poverty "target areas" from Harlem to Pawnee, Okla.

These centers, with administrative funds channeled through the OEO's local community-action agencies, were to screen applicants for the loans and provide a major portion of the required business training and counseling. The centers themselves had no money to lend. The funds, as much as \$100 million, were to be provided over an indefinite period from the Small Business Administration treasury. After choosing likely candidates, the centers were to forward loan requests to the SBA, which was given the power to approve or reject them.

From the start, OEO officials assumed that Congress would want the loans to go to persons in the lowest eco-

nomic groups—a reasonable assumption since the program was an anti-poverty measure. OEO touted the loans as "a bold new effort to offer opportunity in business to talented and energetic low-income people. . . ." But OEO's initial enthusiasm outstripped its Congressional mandate for Title IV said that loans could be made only when "there is a reasonable assurance of repayment," a provision that inevitably led to criteria more suited to a credit bureau than to a poverty program. Further, the House report on the bill clearly indicated that the loans were to be made to very small or marginal businesses with emphasis not on persons seeking a start but on enterprises already established.

But a more serious flaw in the program was a lack of funds to give adequate training to the people approved for loans, only a fourth of whom had completed high school, and many of whom lacked rudimentary business skills. In the first eighteen months of the program an estimated \$270,000, or only about \$108 per person, was spent for training and counseling. A management study for OEO—made, unfortunately, a year and a half after the program got under way—estimated that an adequate training and counseling program would cost at least \$50 per person.

Training in most cases was restricted to fifteen or twenty hours of instruction—mostly lectures—at local colleges or universities. The courses included bookkeeping, merchandising and record management, but the work was rarely tailored to the special needs of individual recipients. Some personal counseling was provided by cent-

staffs or by Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), but such meetings were infrequent and short. A survey conducted for OEO showed that most of the trainees were completely dissatisfied.

The first clashes between the two agencies came at the opening ceremonies of the Small Business Development Centers. Local SBA officials had been told by their superiors in Washington to screen applicants and award loans before the centers opened, so that successful applicants would be on hand for the first-day publicity. This order clearly usurped the functions of the OEO, and in about half the centers OEO personnel complained bitterly about the SBA's preselection activities.

Following these initial frictions, a mistrust developed between workers at the centers and the SBA officials. Viewed from the centers, the SBA appeared to be too conventional, too business-oriented; while in the minds of SBA administrators the centers were concerned too much with social work and not enough with good business principles. The regional SBA offices regularly took up to eight months to process applications forwarded after initial screening by the centers, and then turned down 40 per cent.

In the first few months of the program the SBA agreed to base loans on subjective judgments of character and management ability rather than on traditional credit ratings. But its increasingly exacting criteria soon made clear that it wanted to grant loans to small businessmen in the lower-middle-income brackets rather than to poverty cases. In November, 1965, after much tugging by the SBA, an income standard was adopted. The maximum income that was set, for example, for a family of four was \$4,630, or \$1,500 above the OEO's definition of poverty for the same size family.

But even this inflated poverty definition did not satisfy the SBA for long. Regional loan officers said that the income ceilings were still so low that they were being forced to make too many high-risk loans. In March, 1966, the income standard, again for a family of four, was raised to \$5,630 (or \$2,500 above the OEO poverty

line). As Sargent Shriver noted during a Congressional post-mortem on the program last March 15, "The loan program was continuing to draw even farther away from OEO's real 'constituents' in poverty."

A second concession gained by the SBA altered a policy under which loans had been made to businessmen with incomes well above the poverty range who promised to hire the chronically underemployed. Both the OEO and the SBA originally saw this as a direct means of creating jobs for the poor. But in practice few jobs opened up; businessmen often promised to hire the poor in order to obtain the loan, then failed to do so. The deputy director of the New York SBA office, Raymond Curran, recently told me: "These loans were difficult to police. But we didn't think it was right to put people out of work by canceling the loan when we did find cheating." Curran may have been prepared to allow incompletely honored loans to stand for the sake of whatever jobs were created, but SBA officials in Washington were not. They suggested that the hire-the-poor standard be discontinued. In November, 1965, over the protests of Negro business associations and many Small Business Development Centers, this direct means of creating jobs was dropped.

From late 1964 until October, 1966, when Congress rescinded the OEO commitment to the loan program, more than 2,700 loans totaling \$27.6 million were made, mostly to businesses in slum communities. Although the loans were not designed specifically to aid Negroes, the program had a definite urban and hence Negro orientation. Half the loans went to Negroes and Puerto Ricans. Ninety per cent of the recipients were already employed. The default rate was 3.4 per cent, a third higher than the normal SBA rate of 2.4 per cent and far above the average commercial bank default rate of 0.2 per cent. Still, under the circumstances it was considered surprisingly low.

Despite this apparent success with a limited number of cautiously selected individuals, OEO became increasingly disenchanted with the Economic Loan Program ex-



periment during 1966. Not only was the SBA rejecting two out of five loans recommended by OEO and keeping up pressure for a business rather than social approach to the project but few additional jobs for the poor were being created, and the OEO field workers were having trouble finding reasonably sound risks even within the revised income criteria.

These difficulties were reinforced by a 111-page study prepared for the OEO by Kirschner Associates of Albuquerque, N.M., which told the anti-poverty agency what the SBA had been saying all along: "Evidence strongly indicates that the smallest businesses are those with the greatest difficulty of surviving. Evidence also indicates that the 'long-term underemployed' are generally those who can make the least contribution to the success of an endeavor. . . ." Its conclusion, hardly comforting to the OEO, was: "The program must focus on the highest levels of the rather low economic strata that can qualify; that is, it must concentrate on the businessman requiring capital and not on the less qualified person in poverty aspiring to enter business." Even to have a chance to compete, the poor would need much more thorough training than they were getting under the program as it was then set up, the study showed.

These considerations came to the fore at a time when the OEO was on the defensive generally. There were signs that many in Congress wanted to dismember the sprawling anti-poverty agency and parcel out its major projects to other departments of the government. The loan program had a relatively low priority among the activities the OEO was preparing to fight for. As one of its officials put it: "We had other fish to fry."

That summer, Robert Perrin, OEO's assistant director for Interagency Relations, paved the way for withdrawal from the loan project when he told the House Select Committee on Small Business: "We at OEO sometimes question whether this program properly is part of the arsenal of weapons over which we have primary and statutory jurisdiction. . . . Perhaps it could be better handled as an SBA operation." Perrin's suggestion was immediately challenged by Berkely Burrell, president of the National Business League, an association of middle-class Negro businessmen. Burrell told the House committee that Negro leaders opposed any shift of the loan program exclusively to the SBA, which "has no historical record of being responsive to the community for which I speak." But no objections were raised by spokesmen for the very poor, Negro or white.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill, however, OEO's discouragement was noted by Congressional friends of the SBA. In particular, Perrin's suggestion interested Rep. John Dingell, Jr., a Democrat from a middle-class district with a large Polish population in Detroit and its suburbs. Dingell believed that the OEO's efforts were misguided, and he even had a "scandal" in Detroit to prove it.

In March, 1966, a reporter for the *Detroit News* had discovered that one of the first loans for \$25,000 in Detroit had gone to a woman who owned a Lincoln Continental and whose combined family income was in excess of \$11,000. The loan, for a combination ice cream parlor-shoeshine shop-export-import emporium, was made before the guidelines were set; local anti-poverty officials

admitted that they pushed the application through in order to have a loan to announce at the opening of the Detroit center. After the *News* story appeared, Dingell ordered a committee investigation. At that time he said: "I am a friend of the program. This is not an attempt to stifle the whole program." But he added with just the right touch of righteous indignation that he wanted to be sure the loans were being made "with proper attention to the care of the public treasury." In fact, under the guidelines issued shortly after the Detroit loan was made, it would have been proper. The recipient had promised to hire ten to seventeen unemployed workers for a new store, thus meeting the hire-the-poor standard.

The stage was now set to end OEO's excursion into small-business activities. In the last days of the 89th Congress the House opened debate on OEO's budget for fiscal 1967. The bill submitted by the Administration called for no change in the joint management of the Economic Opportunity Loan Program. Rather belatedly, it requested that \$5 million in community-action funds be earmarked for business training and counseling of loan applicants by the Small Business Development Centers in fiscal 1967.

Representative Dingell, with the full knowledge and technical advice of the SBA, but with neither the consent nor opposition of the OEO, introduced an amendment to the basic anti-poverty bill giving complete authority over loans to the SBA and cutting out the badly needed training funds. No one rose to challenge Dingell's amendment, and it was approved by a voice vote. The OEO made only a few halfhearted attempts in the Senate to save its share of the project. A handful of center workers wrote to their home state Senators. But according to Senate anti-poverty subcommittee staff members, the OEO appeared glad to be rid of the loan program.

At the insistence of Sen. Jacob Javits (R., N. Y.), however, the \$5-million business-training authorization was restored to the bill by a conference committee. Thus, at a time when the centers were deprived of any authority over the loan program, including even the function of preliminary screening, they finally gained funds sufficient to train 10,000 successful applicants. Under the law the centers will be closed at the end of June, although OEO officials estimate that less than half of the \$5-million allocation will be spent by then.

Since October, when the SBA assumed total control the character and results of the loan program have been drastically altered, virtually abandoning its anti-poverty basis. Although loans are now available in SBA offices in all fifty states, less than half of them are being made to persons considered to be poor under the last joint OEO-SBA guidelines (which, as noted, were far above the OEO poverty line). The number and amount of loans to middle-income people has doubled, there are proportionately fewer Negro recipients, and fewer new businesses are being started. Rural and small-town businessmen, the traditional clientele of the SBA, make up a large share of the successful applicants.

Under the SBA, Economic Opportunity Loans come in two sizes: up to \$15,000 for individuals whose income is, in the guideline's loose wording, "below that which

is required to meet the needs of themselves and those of their immediate families who are dependent on them," and up to \$25,000 for businessmen whose incomes exceed the inflated poverty standards.

According to Bernard Boutin, SBA Administrator and a former deputy director of the OEO, the primary emphasis of the first category is on sound loans to existing, if not thriving, businesses. Boutin told local SBA officials: "While new businesses qualify . . . we do not intend to provide start-up financing for a small grocery, beauty

not necessarily disqualify an applicant, because local credit interviewers are instructed to look for the "underlying causes of the financial trouble." To the SBA's way of thinking, mitigating circumstances include personal illness or physical handicap.

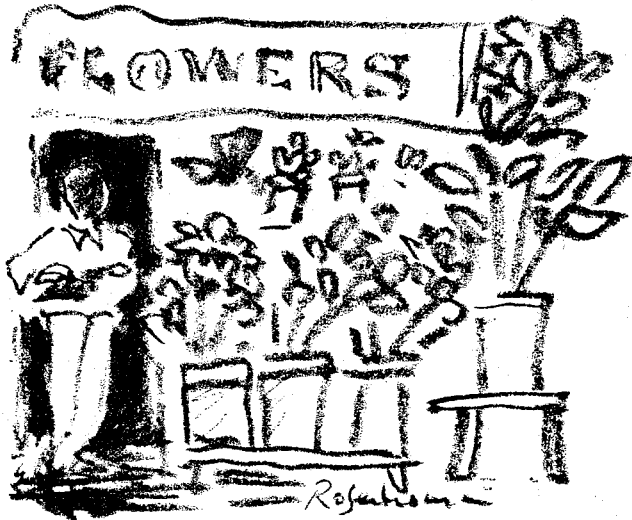
The second type of loan, for \$25,000, is made to persons "who have sound business plans, management ability, and a strong desire to start their own businesses." These loans are designed for people in what the SBA calls the "financial no man's land"—those too poor for regular SBA loans and too well off for the first category of Economic Opportunity Loans. SBA officials hope to finance businesses not traditionally associated with the low-income groups. "We are looking for the young Negro engineer who is currently with GE but who has an idea how to make a better transistor and needs capital to set up a small plant," they say. Nevertheless, most of the more than 250 second-category loans made so far—totaling more than \$3.5 million—have gone to the kind of traditional business enterprises that Boutin hopes to avoid. Apparently the SBA considers it proper for wealthier clients to own the ghettos' hot dog stands, though the agency proscribes the same endeavors for the poor.

After the Small Business Development Centers close in June, the SBA no longer will be able to rely on the OEO to make the initial contacts with loan applicants. Thus, reaching promising candidates could become the SBA's biggest problem in the months ahead. Philbin told me that his agency would like to make more loans to the very poor but that the supply of "qualified" applicants, particularly Negroes, was limited. He said he thought that civil rights organizations such as the Urban League should bring candidates to the attention of the local loan officers.

The SBA is, nevertheless, doing some field work and claims some impressive results in what it calls "outreach" efforts. Manhattan-based SBA men now regularly ride a circuit into the smaller cities as far north as Albany. In Illinois, the regional director claims that businessmen in dozens of communities help him spot candidates.

While circuit riding may help overcome the physical distances between the SBA and the potential applicants, it may have a limited effect on social distances. As one official in SBA's Washington headquarters told me: "These opportunity loans take many of our people into an entirely new world." With few exceptions the SBA representatives are white. Administrator Boutin has issued orders requiring that at least one member of the regional office teams be from "a minority group," but it will take time for the offices to put the order into effect. And top SBA officials concede that many local officers are not proceeding enthusiastically with the program.

In October, Congress set up the SBA's loan program through June, 1971. It seems clear that under SBA's control it will have its share of successes, but it is no longer in any sense an anti-poverty measure. The basic question of whether impoverished, chronically unemployed persons, given adequate training, can succeed in small business remains unanswered. But the question of whether a business-oriented agency—and nation—is willing to take the necessary risks to find out seems to have been answered rather effectively by the unhappy career of the Economic Opportunity Loan Program.



parlor, carry-out food shop, or other business of the type traditionally operated by members of disadvantaged groups unless there is a clear indication that such a business will fill an economic void in the community."

The effect of Boutin's rule of thumb is to help freeze the pattern of discrimination and absentee business ownership in low-income communities—a condition prevailing particularly in urban Negro slums. For instance, it is estimated that in central Harlem at least 85 per cent of the more than 2,000 small businesses are owned by white merchants who live outside the community. The Negro share of central Harlem's \$50 million worth of business has not increased very much in thirty years, Negro businessmen say. New York's large commercial banks generally look with disfavor on business financing in Harlem, and none works with the SBA in financing Economic Opportunity Loans even though they are fully guaranteed by the federal government. As a vice president of a large New York bank told me: "We're in business to make money, not to run a charity. You don't expect us to get into the never-never land of social responsibility?"

The program as the OEO wanted it run might have been able to attack this community problem to a limited degree. Instead, the SBA has stiffened its profit-oriented attitude. And as the director of the Economic Opportunity Loan Program, Philbin has said: "We want responsible individuals who will consider their debts to the government to be morally binding. We check credit ratings to see whether they stand a reasonable chance of repaying the loan." According to Philbin, a poor credit rating does

ABORTION: LAWS AND ATTITUDES

PHIL KERBY

Los Angeles

A typical newspaper report on Colorado's new abortion law read: "Last week Colorado enacted the most permissive abortion law in the nation's history—a law so liberal that a cry went up from its opponents that the state would become an 'abortion mill' for the rest of the country."

In fact, the Colorado legislation, passed April 25, is liberal only in comparison with the archaic laws of forty-five other states, which permit abortion solely to save the life of the mother. Four others—Alabama, Maryland, New Mexico and Oregon, and the District of Columbia—sanction abortions to preserve the mother's health.

The Colorado law, contrary to the impression created by the press, represents a cautious approach to a major medical problem: an estimated 1 million criminal abortions in the United States each year, with an estimated 5,000 maternal deaths. Colorado now permits abortions to save the mother's life, to preserve her mental or physical health, and to interrupt a pregnancy when the child is likely to be born with grave physical deformity or mental retardation. A three-doctor board in an accredited hospital must agree unanimously before a therapeutic abortion is approved.

If all the other states were to follow Colorado's lead, public health authorities predict a mere 3 to 5 per cent increase in the present 10,000 legal abortions a year. Rep. Richard D. Lamm, sponsor of the Colorado reform, said reports that the state is flooded with calls from women seeking abortions are propaganda. "We have had a few inquiries, which is natural, but all our hospitals have taken a conservative and restrictive interpretation of the law. I wouldn't be at all surprised this year if we had fewer legal abortions than last year, which, in a state of over 2 million, was forty."

The Colorado law and similar legislation proposed this year in about half the other states make no provision for the married woman who simply does not want to have a child, and at least 80 per cent of illegal abortions in the United States are performed on married women. Advocates of reform understand the problem, but believe it impossible to gain support now for any measure more liberal than the Colorado law.

Bills almost identical to the Colorado measure are stalled in the California legislature. Gov. Ronald Reagan has said he would sign a liberalized bill if it prohibited abortions to prevent the birth of a defective child. Reagan stated: "I cannot justify the taking of an unborn life simply on the supposition that the baby may be born less than a perfect human being." State Sen. A. C. Beilenson, sponsor of reform legislation in the Senate, replied that Reagan is against any modification of the present law and charged that the Governor's staff is working covertly against his bill.

With contraception more widely practiced now and more effective than ever before, why press for a more flexible attitude toward abortion? The answer lies in the

statistics. Garrett Hardin, professor of biology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, points out that about 3 million of the 25 million married women of child-bearing age in the United States want a child in any one year. This means that 22 million are exposed to undesired pregnancy. The pill fails for one woman in every 100 during a year; other methods are less effective, and the combined failure of contraceptive devices produces between 2 and 3 million undesired pregnancies each year among married women. In addition, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates that about 250,000 unmarried women become pregnant annually in the United States.

Thirty years ago Denmark and Sweden enacted therapeutic abortion laws, but a high criminal abortion rate persisted until they were amended to include "extended medical" reasons, which take into account the overall welfare of the mother and her family. Great Britain is considering a change in its law to permit abortions when "the pregnant woman's capacity as a mother will be severely overstrained."

Arguing from the experience of Sweden and Denmark, Ruth Roemer, associate researcher in public health law at the UCLA School of Public Health, says the Colorado law represents only a limited advance and will not materially reduce the toll in maternal deaths and disability from criminal abortion. Mrs. Roemer estimates that criminal abortions cause one-fifth of the maternal deaths in the United States.

Since they liberalized their abortion laws a decade ago, Eastern European countries have experienced a sharp increase in legal abortions and a simultaneous drop in maternal mortality. The rise in legal abortions corresponds closely to the provisions of the law in each country. Czechoslovakia, for example, which permits abortion on broadly interpreted social as well as medical indications, has a ratio of twenty-nine abortions to 100 live births. But Hungary, which allows abortion on request, unless interruption of pregnancy is medically unwise, reports 140 abortions to 100 live births.

Abortion is a health problem on a world scale. Reports presented at the eighth conference of the International Planned Parenthood Federation last April in Santiago, Chile, said that 15 million to 20 million women undergo induced abortions each year. It is evident that the laws and mores in various countries do not control the incidence of illegal operations. Dr. Frank Novak of the Ljubljana Faculty of Medicine in Yugoslavia told the conference that European countries whose laws limit access to legal abortions and contraceptives were reporting "more abortions, regardless of legality." The treatment of women after illegal abortions is one of the major burdens on hospitals and public health services in South America. Dr. Rolando Armijo of Chile said that in Santiago alone, a city of 2.5 million people, 50,000 abortions occurred last year.

The effects of strict laws against abortion fall most

heavily on the poor. The California Committee on Therapeutic Abortion reports that an average of ten women daily are admitted to the Los Angeles County General Hospital, suffering from infections, hemorrhages and other results of self-inflicted abortions or back-alley operations performed by unqualified practitioners. In the county as a whole, it is estimated that there may be as many as 20,000 cases of this kind a year. A statement signed by twenty sociologists and clinical psychologists of the University of California commented: "The wealthy may go abroad and secure a legal abortion, but the poor must break the law" at the risks of "disastrous effects on physical and mental health."

And the wealthy, in some instances, do not have to go abroad. Dr. Robert E. Hall, associate clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology, Columbia University, states that "infected abortion cases abound on hospital charity wards, not in our private pavilions. To a degree, the medical profession is responsible for this through its *inequitable distribution of therapeutic abortions among ward and private patients.*" (Emphasis added.) A 1960-62 survey of New York City hospitals revealed the ratio of therapeutic abortions to live births as follows: in proprietary hospitals, 1 to 250; in the private wards of voluntary hospitals, 1 to 400; in the ward services of the same voluntary hospitals, 1 to 1,400, and in the municipal hospitals, 1 to 10,000.

Such discriminatory practice extends to ethnic origin. The ratio of therapeutic abortions to live births among white women in New York City is 1 to 380, but among nonwhites, it is 1 to 1,000; and among Puerto Ricans, 1 to 10,000. Half of the puerperal deaths among New York's Negroes and Puerto Ricans are due to criminal abortions, as opposed to only a quarter of those deaths among white women. Dr. Hall's comments underscore what has long been known: abortions are performed in American hospitals for reasons other than to protect the life of the mother. The law is broken to accommodate the well to do.

Dr. Hall, in common with the large majority of American physicians, wants the law liberalized. Dr. Carl Goldmark, an obstetrician, gynecologist and member of the Board of Directors of the Association for the Study of Abortion in New York, asserts: "There should be no abortion laws at all. No law tells me if I can amputate a leg or perform a Caesarean, and no law should govern whether I can perform an abortion." Dr. Goldmark's position is not widely shared by the medical profession, which advocates change to permit therapeutic abortion, but shies away from approving, as it is phrased, "abortion on demand." Dr. Keith P. Russell, clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Southern California, and a strong advocate of modifying present abortion laws, said: "I believe that perhaps only 20 per cent of physicians favor abortions on social or economic grounds. The majority view it, as I do, as a medical problem."

If Dr. Goldmark represents one extreme side of the controversy, the Roman Catholic Church represents the other. Catholic doctrine forbids abortion for

any reason. The dour Archbishop of Los Angeles, James Francis Cardinal McIntyre, who is leading the fight in California against reform, wrote to the *Los Angeles Times*: "A most fundamental and primary principle in the economy of existence is the 'right to life.' This right is inherent in the process of creation. Once conception is effected, immediately follows the 'right' of the embryo, which will mature into a human being. Any interference with that process constitutes the taking of life. . . ." Writing to Sen. A. C. Beilenson, a woman expressed the same view more harshly: "Abortion is the deliberate, cold-blooded murder of an innocent child."

It was a Catholic physician, Dr. James V. McNulty of Los Angeles, a former member of the California State Board of Medical Examiners, who caused charges of unprofessional conduct to be brought by the board against nine San Francisco doctors. The nine performed therapeutic abortions in San Francisco hospitals during an epidemic of German measles in 1965; all the abortions were undertaken only after approval by hospital staff committees. Medical research indicates an 8 per cent to 50 per cent possibility that the child of a mother infected with German measles during pregnancy will be deformed. The percentage depends on the month of pregnancy in which the disease is contracted.

Dr. McNulty said: "I was interested from a legal standpoint; these doctors were saying they were above the law. Even though I'm a Catholic—they always point that out—the law is the law." Dr. McNulty is not opposed to the Beilenson bill "on principle" and believes the Catholic view "should not be imposed on the majority."

The action against the doctors is the first use of California's 1872 abortion law against physicians who openly terminated pregnancies in a hospital. Swift reaction followed. Dr. Edmund W. Overstreet, vice chairman of obstetrics at the University of California, denounced the charges: "We do not believe that violation of an archaic statute is unprofessional conduct." William K. Coblentz, San Francisco lawyer and a regent of the University of California, heads a distinguished defense committee. California physicians pressing for reform are supported by the Executive Board of the Federation of Women's Clubs, the State Bar Convention, the California Council of Churches, the Northern California Board of Rabbis, the California Division of the American Association of University Women and several social work organizations.

While Catholic religious leaders resist any change, lay Catholic opinion is sharply divided. *Modern Medicine* announced in April that its survey of 40,000 doctors in every state showed that 49.1 of the responding Catholic physicians approved of liberalizing the law. (Among non-Catholic doctors, 93.3 per cent favored modification.) A recent survey by the California Poll, conducted by Field Research, reported that 67 per cent of California Catholics support liberalization, and 10 per cent favored unrestricted abortions. (Public health workers say that Catholics make up a high percentage of the attendance at family planning clinics. The Church still officially proscribes artificial birth control, but the majority of the committee established by the Vatican

to advise Pope Paul VI on birth control recommended lifting the ban.)

Division of Catholic opinion on the subject has a long history. Until the late 16th century, the Church allowed interruption of pregnancy. Abortions were prohibited for a short period and again permitted for nearly three centuries until 1869. High abortion rates persist in countries with predominantly Catholic populations.

Left out of the present agitation for reform, even by most physicians, are the rights of the married woman pregnant with an unwanted child. Professor Hardin observes that "contraception is a method of birth control invented largely by men, but the consequences of its failure are paid by women."

Therapeutic abortion boards established in hospitals are often called upon, in the words of Dr. Hall, "to render moral judgments. Through the detachment typical of committees in general, this judgment is apt to be more academic than humane." Dorothy Stolz, executive director of the California Committee on Therapeutic Abortion, says there is an "underground of resentment among married women who find it dreadful, under such circumstances, to be brought before a panel of men for judgment." Dorothy Kenyon, a former municipal court judge in New York, agrees: "For a state to force a woman to bear a child against her will is outrageous."

Psychological stress is sometimes suffered by women after an abortion, but this is not typically true nor does

it have to be true. Professor Hardin believes that a physician who "tries to argue his patient out of a desperately wanted abortion by predicting psychological consequences is not so much predicting as creating grief." Studies have shown that remorse following an abortion is not intrinsic, but results from the beliefs of the woman or the taboos of her culture.

Pressure for reform of abortion laws has arisen in recent years principally from the medical profession, which limits its concern to the medical aspects of pregnancy; but a demand for far-reaching liberalization is inevitable because of one of the great revolutions of the 20th century: the increasingly effective separation of copulation from reproduction and the separation—at least in the minds of many—of "sin" from sex. The new mores are reflected in the results of a poll taken by the Stanford Chapter of the California Committee to Legalize Abortion. It revealed that 72 per cent of the responding students favored general legalized abortions, and 93 per cent said abortion should be as available to the unmarried as to the married woman.

Whatever the consequences, the "sex revolution" has taken place, and no signs of a counterrevolution are at hand. Until abortion laws are extended beyond therapeutic necessity, and as long as science cannot achieve complete control over human reproduction, and unless the poor are educated to make use of present methods of contraception, the mutilations and infections of criminal abortion will continue to wreck the lives of millions.

VIETNAM SUMMER

DOORBELLS FOR PEACE

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL

Mr. Blumenthal, who graduates from Harvard this spring, has been editorial chairman of The Harvard Crimson and a reporter for The Washington Post.

Cambridge

Beginning in June—more than a year before the 1968 elections—students will be out ringing doorbells in middle-class neighborhoods, urging housewives and their husbands to meet with neighbors and discuss methods of opposing the war. Their grass-roots organizing will be part of Vietnam Summer, a national program with headquarters in Cambridge, that hopes ultimately to enlist 10,000 volunteers in some 500 communities across the country. These workers will include clergy, professionals and faculty, as well as students, and will range in political belief from moderate Republicans to New Left radicals. But they will all share at least one common aim: to organize an active and effective constituency against the war between now and 1968.

The organizers of Vietnam Summer assume that most Americans are worried and concerned about the war but remain silent because they feel isolated and powerless. Beginning with the "teach-out" technique of house-to-

house canvassing, workers hope to counter that isolation through local meetings and study sessions. Following this first phase of "education," the neighborhood groups will undertake political action: referendum campaigns, anti-war resolutions in city councils, leaflet distribution in public places, ads in local papers and letters to the editor, resolutions against the war by local Democratic and Republican committees, community speak-outs and panel discussions before local organizations. One favorite activity will be a petition campaign directed at local Congressmen, requesting them to return home for open hearings on the war. Eventually, the local projects may run peace candidates in local elections.

The decision as to tactics—and, even more important, as to general strategy—will be left almost entirely to the local groups. Contrary to the rumors that the national program will attempt to "take over" the anti-war movement, Vietnam Summer's steering committee will not dictate any line to the projects or organizations it supports. It will not mass-produce leaflets (though it may distribute examples of literature which have proved effective in other communities). It will not appoint national staff to "control" the local projects. It will not even provide all the funds needed to initiate organizing activities (most

communities will have to match Vietnam Summer "seed money" with locally raised funds).

Vietnam Summer aims, in fact, only to transmit the first spark of political action to communities. Says Gar Alperovitz, a member of the steering committee and a fellow in Harvard's Kennedy Institute of Politics: "This is not going to be any top-down organization—it will be an open-ended process. We want the projects to fit local needs. . . ." It would even be wrong, Alperovitz insists, to speak of Vietnam Summer as an "organization," since it will have no specific ideological posture, no bureaucracy, not even a governing board of directors.

It would be equally wrong, other organizers contend, to think that Vietnam Summer will be "taken over" by any group, radical or moderate. The informal steering committee which will make funding decisions includes Andy Rudin of the American Friends Service Committee and Dr. Irwin Rosenberg of the Harvard Medical School, as well as executive director Lee Webb, a former national secretary of SDS, and Carl Oglesby, a past president. The coalition will cooperate through *ad hoc* agreements with peace groups ranging from SANE (considered in the "right wing" of the peace movement) to SDS and other New Left organizations. The organizers of Vietnam Summer have not sought support for any third party Presidential candidate; nor have they permitted any Establishment politician such as Robert Kennedy to play a role in the organization (though they have maintained and publicized Martin Luther King's firm and continuing endorsement). As a result of the influence of the New Leftists, particularly Webb, the program is looking more and more beyond middle-class organizing and the 1968 elections to projects in poor and working-class communities and draft-resistance programs among students.

Organizers of Vietnam Summer acknowledge the dan-

ger that the ideas of some radical groups may antagonize middle-class people, but they contend that ideology is usually abandoned when workers reach the field. "These strong ideological attitudes," argues John Maher, a radical steering committee member, "tend to melt away when you get out to doorsteps and begin talking to people. . . . You have to be prepared to deal with people who may never share your ideological perspective." Vietnam Summer will force radicals, Alperovitz says, to "engage American society where it is now, not where they dream it may be." To prepare workers for the difficulties of community organizing, the program will provide one-week training courses at national institutes.

This is not to say, however, that ideology will be banned or discouraged: many of the workers will urge their neighbors to establish organizations capable of exerting pressure for peace even after the Vietnamese War ends, and will attempt to engage these organizations in a thoroughgoing critique of American society. Ideology may be suspended on the doorstep, but it is apt to reappear when workers get their neighbors out of their houses and into study groups and political action.

The program will thus provide a test, as Alperovitz puts it, "of whether people with different ideologies can work in the same program for the same immediate objective." Organizers of the program are encouraged by their success in a Cambridge pilot project, where 100 workers have been canvassing six local precincts and where 50 per cent of residents approached have signed a petition calling on their Congressmen to hold open hearings [see also box below]. But they will need more volunteers and funds to make the program effective on a national scale. They now have commitments from only about 2,000 volunteers, out of the planned 10,000, and only \$120,000 of the minimum \$350,000 they hope to use.

The Amherst Community Referendum

How much effect have protests against the war in Vietnam had in local communities? To find out, students from Amherst College organized a door-to-door referendum in the town of Amherst, Mass., in which citizens were asked to vote on the following statement:

We are concerned with the human and material costs of the War in Vietnam. We urge our government to cease bombing North Vietnam immediately and to recognize the National Liberation Front in negotiations for the establishment of a coalition government in South Vietnam. These proceedings and the withdrawal of foreign troops should be under international supervision.

The results showed 38 per cent of those who answered in agreement, 46 per cent in opposition, and 16 per cent undecided.

Amherst, which serves as home to the college and the University of Massachusetts, is a liberal and active community. It was the only town in the state to give a near plurality to Thomas B. Adams, a peace candidate in the 1966 Democratic Senatorial primary, and in the election gave a strong majority to Republican Edward Brooke, then running as a "dove." Faculty mem-

bers, students and community groups have been prominent in their dissent. Each Sunday about 300 people have stood silently for one hour on the town common in opposition to the killing in Vietnam.

But even in such a community more than a third of the voters approached in the referendum refused to answer, and the bulk of these were clearly opposed to the statement.

As important as the results, however, was the actual meeting with voters and discussion of the war. Canvassers were astonished by the extent to which views were based on emotions, prejudices and misinformation. Many of those polled had deep reservations about the war, but thought it improper to say so publicly. Many said they were powerless and had to believe in the authority of the government. Others were simply afraid to talk.

The Amherst Community Referendum suggests the scope of what is to be done. Those faculty and students who dissent from the war cannot possibly compete with the government's dominance of the mass media. They must come out of their privileged academic circles and attempt to speak directly to the local public.

DORIAN J. FLIEGEL

BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Past Reconstructed

FROM PLANTATION TO GHETTO: An Interpretive History of American Negroes. By August Meier and Elliott M. Rudwick. Hill and Wang. 280 pp. \$5.75.

NEGRO THOUGHT IN AMERICA, 1880-1915: Racial Ideologies in the Age of Booker T. Washington. By August Meier. University of Michigan Press. 336 pp. \$7.50. Paper \$2.25.

EUGENE D. GENOVESE

Mr. Genovese is the author of *The Political Economy of Slavery (Pantheon)*. He will shortly take up his duties as professor of history at Sir George Williams University. He is a member of the editorial boards of *Studies on the Left* and *The Journal of Social History*.

Before World War II and immediately after, an irrepressible band of Negro historians, occasionally joined by a white historian, usually a radical, strove to restore to the Negro a sense of his past and to bring to all Americans a sense of the Negro's contribution to our national life. Until a few years ago works on Negro history were shunned by publishers as unmarketable; today, publishers complain that they cannot get enough books to publish, and scholarly journals vie with one another for manuscripts. This victory has been bought at a price. In order to offset stereotyped notions of Negro passivity, historians have tended to dramatize the heroic moments; in order to force attention to the Negro's place in our national history, they have slid into some sweeping exaggerations. Most of the older scholars tried to keep on guard against a romantic view, but there has been a growing danger of an oscillation from a reactionary and ignorant view of the Negro, or no view at all, to a romantic and one-dimensional view. Thus the ideologically conservative portrait of every slave a Sambo has given way to the ideologically liberal portrait of every slave a potential Nat Turner.

August Meier has been in many ways emotionally and intellectually tied to the older, heroic school of Negro history; but strong doses of skepticism and a noticeable aversion to dogmatism temper his passionate commitment to racial justice and equality and, together with his impressive learning, place him in the front rank of his field. *From Plantation*

to *Ghetto* is more than another history of the Negro in America. Meier and Rudwick have written seven essays designed to present basic data within the framework of frank interpretation and even speculation.

Of especially high quality among the ante-bellum subjects treated is the account of the essential contribution of the Negro to the abolitionist movement, and of the discrimination encountered there. Apart from the commanding and irresistible Frederick Douglass, no Negro played a leading role in abolitionist circles, and few innovations came from black abolitionists. The authors properly interpret these circumstances as a reflection of discrimination and point to the absurdity of some exasperated Negroes' having had to organize segregated abolitionist societies. Yet, we may also observe that the objective outcome left the Negro leaders ill prepared to develop an independent program and movement during Reconstruction. The record of black suffering and heroism during the war and Reconstruction is presented here, but so is the record of political ineptness and of the failure of independent leadership.

The comparison of the 1860s and 1960s lays bare the long history of boycotts, sit-ins and other militant actions against segregation, and demonstrates how every important Negro gain, then and now, has had to be fought for tenaciously. The account of labor struggles, especially in the Knights of Labor and the Industrial Workers of the World, avoids both exaggerations of Negro-white unity and superficial anti-labor polemics. The treatment of the migration from the South explores the movement of social institutions as well as persons; the examination of religious cults as an alternative to explosive nationalism is suggestive, and the discussion of the matrifocal family is well balanced and free of the claptrap usually manifest in such discussions. The authors do a particularly good job with the "New Negro" movement and its ethnic dualism.

The frankly interpretive aspect of the book invites quarreling. As stimulating as it is, *From Plantation to Ghetto* has some strange features and dubious judgments. For example, it contains an illuminating analysis of

the continuity of response from ante-bellum to post-bellum times, but devotes 59 pages to the small number of ante-bellum free Negroes and only 43 pages to the great mass of slaves, with little attention paid to their daily life. The Negro in the United States was largely formed within the system of plantation slavery, as the title of the book suggests, and the subject cannot be by-passed without doing it violence.

The discussion of slave society suffers from the authors' neo-abolitionist bias—a bias that regrettably dominates the liberal and radical Left today. Thus, they talk nonsense about slave breeding, relying on arguments that U. B. Phillips demolished fifty years ago. That a woman's "anticipated fecundity" helped determine her market value is merely to say that she was property—i. e., a slave. We know that much. The point is that the sexes on farms and plantations were numerically in balance, that "rattling good breeders" did not command suspiciously high premiums, that only in rare instances did forced mating for breeding purposes occur, and most important, that planters generally did everything possible to encourage their slaves to live in stable family units. Elsewhere in the Americas, where slave breeding was attempted, the result was usually a failure. The high birth rate in the United States demonstrates not deliberate breeding but the relative comfort and stability of slave life. In the older areas of the South the natural increase could not be absorbed into production and partially had to be sold off. In this sense "slave raising" was objectively a part of the system and essential to its economic viability. Undeniably, family units were too often broken up in these sales. From this point to the assertion of deliberate slave breeding, or the implication that most *de facto* slave families were broken up, is a long, illogical and empirically false step.

The authors exaggerate absenteeism and thereby miss the main point of the Southern slave system—that it was dominated by a class of resident planters whose daily lives inevitably, and despite their best efforts, became bound up with the lives of their Negroes. Accordingly, the bonds of sentiment, as well as of economic interest, are underestimated, and with them the slaves' level of material comfort. They end with an undistinguished account of the factors re-

sponsible for the low incidence of slave insurrection in the United States.

When the authors move beyond Reconstruction they get progressively stronger. Accordingly, the best parts of their ante-bellum chapters are those which lead in a straight line to later problems. The dominant notion of Booker T. Washington—that thrift, sobriety and economic achievement would gain for the Negro recognition and respect from the white community—beguiled many Negro leaders long before Washington was born. The assumption proved false. Evidence of Negro sobriety, thrift and economic achievement in an essentially racist society more often than not simply enraged a large part of the white community. During the Atlanta riot of 1906—to take only one of many examples—it was precisely these “uppity, aloof, smart-assed niggers” who bore the brunt of white violence.

Negro thought from ante-bellum days to the present has ranged along a continuum of ideologies from assimilation to separatism, with a bewildering number of combinations and variations between the extremes. The authors are at their best in leading the reader through what at first glance appears to be a hopeless maze. For a single illustration consider the following passage in *From Plantation to Ghetto*:

The gap between ideal and practice in American society meant that Negroes not only wanted to be a part of that society, but that they also found it desirable to develop their own group life within it. Thus, ironically, the establishment of the separate Negro church and fraternal organizations was both a form of protest against racism and yet an accommodation to it.

The chapter on the civil rights movement, although uneven, is often excellent and will repay close reading. Its deficiencies stem in part from the earlier errors concerning slavery's effect on the Negro and in part from a Left-liberal or social-democratic (if there is much of a difference any more) bias. The nationalist tendency is in general badly slighted, although occasionally treated with refreshing skill. The authors search the various protest groups to discover their social composition and conclude that personality rather than social class separates them from one another. No doubt they have a point, but the main question concerns the class implications of their programs, not the social origins of their leaders and members. They do explore, with considerable insight, the general radicalization of the civil rights movement since 1963.

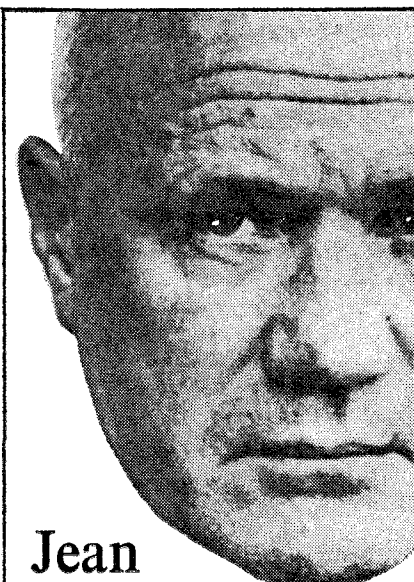
Many other specific arguments could

be joined. The rosy account of the March on Washington ought to be read along with the caustic account in the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*. The implication that Robert F. Williams lost his post in the NAACP because he advocated *offensive* violence is unworthy of the authors. The statement that SNCC militants scorned Johnson's maneuvers at the 1964 Democratic convention because “they reject on ideological grounds the compromises inherent in the American political system” is an inexcusably silly way to deal with the ideological complexities of a rapidly changing, radical, opposition movement.

The most unsatisfactory part of their treatment of the recent period concerns the cold war. The authors tell us that domestic racism was reinforced during 1890 to 1914 by the ideological exigencies of imperialism—a view that has been respectable and indeed standard fare since the publication of C. Vann Woodward's *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*—but they shy away from the relationship between racism and foreign policy in recent decades. Their observation that Communist espousal of the Negro cause has embarrassed the United States Government into policy shifts is well taken, but they display no small uneasiness about pursuing the matter.

They do explain in a footnote that the escalation of the war in Vietnam occurred too late to permit them to assess the new situation, but one detects that a combination of partisanship for the Negro cause, unhappiness about American imperialism, and stanch anti-communism has created a world in which they are less than comfortable. It is to their credit, in view of their anti-communism, that they have made a genuine effort to do justice to the contribution of American Communists in the fight for Negro liberation and have refrained from having jolly good fun with the more imbecilic gyrations of the party line. Yet the result of their uneasiness about cold-war issues leads naturally to a weak and disappointing end to an admirable if sometimes irritating book. No one today can predict the outcome of the present struggle, but surely such learned and sophisticated students as these ought to do better than to end with the question: Where will it all lead?

If Meier's *Negro Thought in America* (first published in 1963 and now appearing in paperback) is the more significant of the two books—one destined to reshape much of our thinking—it is also the easier to deal with. Not that it is a simple book, for its beauty lies in the clarity with which so many complexities and subtle nuances



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MIRACLE OF THE ROSE

Translated by Bernard Frechtman
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Photo: Jerry Bauer

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GENERATION AT THE NOONDAY

*We have the power now.
We administer, our
progenitors are dead. We talk
angrily, thinking of the young.*

*This is the time when enemies
are known to us and when our friends
call us up on the phone
and they say we need you now.*

*My friends have evil eyes.
My reaction to them is normal,
and they are normal.
The deepest terror has no shadow.*

JOHN KNOEPFLE

are explored. Rather, its exhaustive scholarship and astute analysis provide an overwhelming case for its main contentions and provoke fewer quarrels.

Meier focuses on the articulate Negroes and accepts some distortion, for, as he observes, these would tend to be the prominent and socially privileged. To compensate somewhat, he searches institutional as well as intellectual developments in order to get some clues to the state of mind of the masses. Perhaps his most important contribution is the demonstration of a persistent quality in Negro life between integrationism and separatism and especially his probing examination of the specific forms and consequences of this duality. Meier points out that the integrationist tendency has generally prevailed during periods of upsurge, optimism and white dependence on Negro support—as, for example, during the War for Southern Independence and immediately thereafter—whereas the separatist (Black

Nationalist, Black Power) tendency has generally prevailed during periods of defeat and disillusionment and the flight of white allies.

This integrationist-separatist antagonism has rarely expressed itself in pure form; usually both elements, although in different proportions, have intruded themselves into movements and even individuals. Cutting across this antagonism has been the division between the leaders and the led. The generalization laid down by Meier for Reconstruction will, with proper application, serve for other occasions: "While the masses were primarily interested in landownership, the elite leaders, who had achieved some sort of economic security, were first and foremost interested in political and civil rights." Throughout the history of the Negro in America the emphasis on economic advance has been closely related to separatism and has been a working-class as well as a petty-bourgeois demand. Philosophies of racial exclusiveness and institutional separatism have formed part of a broader complex of ideas that has included racial pride and solidarity. In the age of Booker T. Washington, as well as before and since, Negroes have had to fight for integration, while creating separate organizations. "They appeared to be creating a segregated movement in itself, to be fostering the very thing they were attacking." Much of Meier's book is devoted to a searching examination of this paradoxical duality.

The clarity with which Meier presents this duality renders strange his assessment of Booker T. Washington. He insists on cluttering up an incisive discussion with dark suggestions that Washington's preponderance somehow does not indicate that he reflected the "as-

pirations" of the black masses and that he was "power" motivated. "Aspirations" is a loaded word. The point, as Meier's account shows, is that Washington spoke for and to the possibilities for the Southern black masses in a period of retreat and defeat. As for "power," Meier's embarrassed discussion provides enough reason to forget it. Washington was human and convinced of his own superior wisdom; the fact remains that he did the best he could for his embattled people. Perhaps the best part of Meier's discussion is his demonstration of the use to which Washington's philosophy was put: in the South it spelled accommodation; in the North a doctrine of self-help and go-it-alone for a people without substantial allies who nonetheless had the wherewithal to assume a defiant stance.

One of Meier's most significant findings concerns the decline in Washington's power, which roughly coincided with the formation of the NAACP. By the time he died, most of his power had disappeared. As his political position with the Republican Party slipped and his control of patronage dwindled, his enemies finally saw their chance. The subsequent changes opened the way for a more militant movement, but proved less extensive than appears on the surface. Northern Negro acceptance of Washington's leadership had never meant acquiescence in his accommodationist philosophy, which had been designed for a difficult Southern setting. Southern Negro acceptance of Washington's leadership had meant such acquiescence because no alternative had presented itself or was to present itself for a long time after his death. The integrationists spoke for a new Negro middle class that aspired to assimilation but was itself rising on an expanding Negro market and had the most to gain from an espousal of racial pride and solidarity. The Northern Negro politicians especially had to walk a tightrope, and part of DuBois' stature rests on his having grasped, so much better and earlier than most, that Negroes somehow had to integrate and separate at the same time.

Meier's account of the years 1880 to 1915 could in most respects be extended into our own day. New problems have arisen to complicate the old, but all or at least most of the old remain, for they have arisen from the paradox of the Negro in America, within which he is nothing if not an American, and still has never been permitted to become fully an American either. Meier's praise of the pragmatic streak in Negro thought is therefore hard to take: "There is something pragmatic

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about the ideologies of American Negroes. They will take the path that seems most likely to eliminate or at least minimize the discrimination involved in the American race system." Reflecting on how far back the Negro remains, we may question the wisdom of this pragmatism. Short-run tactical approaches have their place but their only real virtue lies in their supposed ability to deliver victory. The failure of black America to develop a long-range ideology and strategy of liberation has cost it dearly and, if the present signs of reaction are not deceptive, may soon take another heavy toll. Meier underestimates the savage emasculation wrought by slavery, paternalism and persistent violence. It will take much more than shrewd tactics, limited gains and heroic

moments to bring the black masses that *elan*, self-discipline and political cohesion without which their liberation is unlikely.

It would be unfair to Meier's remarkable effort to press this argument further, but I do wish he had pondered more carefully the words he quotes from the Southern Negro political and religious leader, Bishop Henry M. Turner: "A man who loves a country that hates him is a human dog and not a man." This sentence ought to be taken neither as an understandable but reckless outburst nor as a moral judgment on a too often apathetic people, for it contains in embryo an understanding of the terrible effect wrought by centuries of slavery and a glimpse of the harsh work needed to exorcize it.

A Romantic of the Wretched Life

MIRACLE OF THE ROSE. By Jean Genet. Translated from the French by Bernard Frechtman. Grove Press. 344 pp. \$7.50.

STEPHEN KOCH

Mr. Koch teaches at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Twice during Jean Genet's *Miracle of the Rose* (near the beginning and near the end) the writing gets off the ground and really sails. The flights are spectacular enough, but not in the fashion of the blasting skyrockets to which book reviewers customarily compare such feats. The trajectory is more like the path of a great blue heron moving downstream, its vast wings scarcely moving in the still air as the bird scans the landscape, turning its head from left to right. Everything seems to fall silent as the unearthly vision floats by.

Both of these moments are among the more beautiful and absorbing in modern French literature, and by themselves make this new translation by the late Bernard Frechtman worth the price of possession. But the book offers much more: I mention them only because they are the two moments of sublimity in a complex, self-undermining narrative the ultimate object of which is precisely that—sublimity. As such, they sound a little silly out of context. The first occurs (in a characteristically degraded situation) as Genet and his fellow convicts stand in a corridor of Fontevrault, the French penitentiary which is the novel's setting, and see a murderer named Harcamone being led by guards to the death cell, there to

await the guillotine. The prisoners' eyes turn toward this (to them) gloriously heroic figure "as sunflowers turn to the sun." Suddenly the manacles on the martyr's wrists begin to be transformed into links of white roses. The guards see nothing, and Harcamone keeps walking. The iron door of the cell slams shut.

Following this vision, Harcamone (who is the book's patron saint, invisibly leading it to its conclusion) disappears from the scene, only to reappear in the final pages, though not in the flesh. He invades Genet's dreams in the form of a huge colossus on which crawl judges, jurors and executioners (emissaries from the middle class, against which Genet measures the strength of his private world of demons and martyrs) as termites might creep across the Colossus of Rhodes. These homunculi slowly descend into Harcamone's body (through the mouth) and discover it transformed into a dolorous wonderland—"more decked with black than a capital whose king has just been assassinated."

I am not sure a simple critical description can make either of these passages sound very promising; Genet's motifs often sound merely grandiose without the concentration of imaginative energy that buoys them up and gives them their substance. But the final passage in particular is tremendously powerful, even for Genet: the judge's descent into Harcamone's flesh is a descent into a spiritual mystery, and every phase of the surreal fantasy is given both a tough, concrete presence and a peculiarly mute, admonitory "significance," like the indecipherable totems of some lost civili-

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zation, staring out of ruins at the startled explorer.

Miracle of the Rose therefore begins and ends with transcendent visions of the condemned murderer, Harcamone. Sandwiched between them (though it's a piece of bread between two slices of meat) is Genet's account of more mundane events: his complicated, distracted amours in the bull pen, dove-tailed with his memories of his first prison—the prison orphanage at Mettray, where he spent his boyhood and adolescence in a hierarchical world of little-boy big shots, “chickens” (their loyal, passive boy loves) and “jerks.”

Mettray—a former convent, with encircling walls of stone—was Genet's mother. Fontevault penitentiary was the arena of his perverse movement into manhood. Mettray was Genet's idyll, his pastoral; at Fontevault that idyll was ripped to shreds. Genet's whole effort in this book is to reassemble a shattered and fragmented paradise. This is the immemorial motive that lies at the center of his art, making him the romantic he is—the only first-rate romantic genius of postwar world literature.

Romantic nostalgia can take the standard form of a flight from the present, in which fantasy wafts the mind back to some real or imagined moment of perfection. But it can also wear its struggle with the world on its sleeve and supply the energy for a creative act bound to the present, in which the artist attempts to achieve some kind of spiritual state that overcomes a wounding reality. The individual does not evade the moment, but struggles with it openly—and the struggle is an angry one, directed not only against an unacceptable world but also against time itself. Such a person sees himself as alone. The more evasive nostalgia tends to dissolve the ego; the mind creates in fantasy a perfectly harmonious landscape into which

the self blends without a hitch and disappears into the general bliss. In contrast, Genet's nostalgia erects a demonic ego, fighting a present he never stops facing, and overcoming it on his own.

The nature of this demonic, romantic egoism, its infinitely complex dialectic, and its ethical and aesthetic ramifications have been encyclopedically explored by Sartre in *Saint Genet* (it is an encyclopedia without an index), and I refer anyone interested in the philosophic dimension of Genet's romanticism to that maniacally analytic work. I don't see how anything more can possibly be said on the subject. Some feel that Sartre's dialectics fail to grasp the real genius of Genet: the sensuous glory of the spectacle. I don't agree with this argument—Genet is a philosophic novelist, and his work is inseparable from the serpentine subtlety of his intellect. But it is true that *Saint Genet* is more important to an understanding of Sartre's intellectual position than it is to a reading of Genet, and there is no need to resort to it to grasp what is, I would argue, a philosophic spectacle rendered in strictly poetic terms.

Still, this spectacle creates a strange kind of poetry in 1967. Genet seems to be an increasingly isolated figure in current literature (but then these books, written in the forties, are not current); isolated particularly in France where the classical austerity of the new novel has moved in the opposite direction from his hyperbole, and even in America, where such would-be poets of the ego as Norman Mailer have run into a dead end—failing to get in touch with the poetic resources that keep Genet's prose aloft—and thus have been forced to use every journalistic ploy (including bashes, *gratis*, for theatregoers on Christopher Street) to keep the glorious ego out in front and running.

I think the explanation of his artistic isolation lies in the facts of Genet's life. Like Mailer, Genet is inordinately aware of his audience, but as a *real* (rather than self-appointed) outcast he sees his audience as a mass of aliens, as those who have cast him out, as *them*. His first three books (including this one) were written in a prison cell, under a blanket at night, and hidden in the toilet (where else?) during the day. Genet's whole life has been determined by a real—and very clearly defined—sense of transgression. And for Genet's variety of romanticism, transgression is really a formal property which gives the art its substance and seriousness.

Genet's wretched early life gave him a resounding sense of alienation to which few romantics can aspire, and this unique relation to his audience contains in its interesting impasse a set of artistic possibilities which most authors, lost little children of their own class, have to hoke up as entertainment. But the point is not what society will or will not accept but rather how the artist embodies his own relation to the rest of the world. Ultimately the whole question resolves into a poetic issue: the form the artist gives his isolation—which is why Baudelaire even today retains his singular isolation (damned for sins long forgotten) while Mailer, no matter how jazzy the crime, remains one of *us*.

The central portion of *Miracle of the Rose* moves in a single, uninterrupted block, although one richly strewn with the wherewithal for Sartrean dialectics. This part of the book is much more talky than is either *Our Lady of the Flowers* or *Funeral Rites* (a novel whose structural technique is considerably more inventive than either). Genet's prose is always rather episodic. Typically, he is excited by some real event (meeting a handsome convict on the stairs, seeing a fist fight in the prison yard) and proceeds to expound on it, using his unique mixture of fantasy and intellectual reflection. The other two novels find devices to make this stop-and-start narration more clear-cut and lucid than it is in *Miracle of the Rose*, which sometimes allows its energy to be wasted in talk rather than in keeping things moving at the relentless clip they require.

Some readers (not myself, however) may find this talkiness sufficient compensation for the aesthetic lapse. This is the book in which Genet most extensively discusses his ideas as ideas; here the sociology of his prison life is most fully presented. (Both ideas and information, by the way, are of considerable interest and are expounded with great intelligence.) Needless to add that these expositions are not for “our” bene-

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fit—Genet neither amuses nor instructs his audience (at least not consciously). He seems more concerned with clarifying his life and intellectual position for his own benefit, and getting it down on paper. But to my mind, these maneuvers (evidently a necessary step toward his own maturity) make parts of the central portion of the book somewhat clumsy, in contrast to *Funeral Rites*.

These are minor failings in view of the book's whole achievement. The transgression succeeds on a profound level that has nothing to do with sexual mores or one's opinion as to whether Jean

Genet is or is not a nasty man. In a period in which most art is moving in other directions, *Miracle of the Rose* is a monument to a peculiarly virile kind of energy: an act of transgression and completeness that puts before "us" the determination to create itself autonomously, to stand on its own terms. It begins in rebellion and ends as a work of self-contained beauty which no longer needs "us" to give it meaning. There it stands, unfolding the private splendor of its romance, showing all the tough, curling thorns that will scratch the hand that touches it.

lived too long with, and too close to, the unthinkable.

The people of the village behaved with courage and humanity in the early hours of the crisis, succoring the survivors of the crash—surprisingly there were some survivors—and making determined efforts to rescue the hopelessly smashed and burning bodies of the victims. The parish priest, with his cassock actually on fire, tried to administer the last rites of his Church. Wearily, the reader feels at this point: "We have only their own word for it." The chain of events is in itself so ugly that evidences of normal decency and compassion induce skepticism. Perhaps the U. S. authorities reacted similarly, for there has been no official recognition on their part of any sense of obligation toward the villagers. Perhaps spontaneous gratitude for spontaneous generosity got lost in the dreariness of the haggling over compensation claims.

This book does not make enlivening reading, but it is salutary. Even if we can no longer react to it with any intensity, it is necessary for us to realize what the world we live in is really like. Sometimes, as here, it is intellectually, as distinct from emotionally, more feasible to do this in microcosm.

More Callous Than We Know

THE BOMBS OF PALOMARES. By Tad Szulc. The Viking Press. 288 pp. \$6.50.

MAIRE CRUISE O'BRIEN

Mrs. O'Brien is a former Irish diplomat who spent two years as Secretary of Embassy in Madrid.

This is a lucid, conscientious and humane account of how on January 17, 1966, a B-52 bomber of the Strategic Air Command carrying four hydrogen bombs collided, while refueling, with an aerial tanker over southeastern Spain, and of how both aircraft exploded in midair, filling the sky with flame. Provisionally the bombs jettisoned in time, and although two of them were involved in minor explosions the electro-mechanical safety devices against accidental detonation proved effective. Had they not. . . .?

It is a grim commentary on our society that, for one reader at least, this admirable piece of reporting gives off an undeniable aura of anticlimax and *déjà-vu*. We know about "overkill"; we know we live under the constant menace of just such an accident as this was; we know that the danger we are in is not confined to the sphere of accident. One of the four bombs fell in the sea and took months of organized search to recover; we remember the interlude as comic—it is the classic refuge of impotence.

We are told that as a result of the rupture of the casings around the missiles' warheads in the two minor explosions, some of the inhabitants of the village of Palomares may in twelve to thirty years' time develop cancers due to plutonium poisoning. We know that for the best part of a year their lives were disrupted, their livelihood gravely prejudiced, and that they will have to live with the repercussions of this visitation

in terms of social and economic disadvantage for a long time to come. Against the background of the headlines we read daily it seems a relatively benign tragedy; we have become more callous than we know. A good deal of very serious criticism has been leveled by the author and other professional journalists at the inept handling by the United States of the release of information. Their points are well taken, but, already the entire occurrence seems peripheral and remote—like the village of Palomares itself or the death of President Kennedy.

In part, this lackluster impression is a function of the book's virtues. Mr. Szulc knows and loves Spain and conveys its authentic claustrophobic atmosphere with rare success. The result is an orchestration of boredoms: the desperate boredom of poverty, the frustration and hardship of Lorca's Andalusia—the boredom of the Top Brass, Dr. Strangelove's people—of the provisional and the arbitrary which is the hallmark of General Franco's police state—the glossy boredom of the diplomatic corps. They are all here and their dehumanized and deadening interactions are faithfully recorded. When a little boy of 9 called Tony (the author's son?) takes an unscheduled part in the ghastly ambassadorial "swim-in," which declared the Mediterranean free from radioactive contamination, one feels like cheering: "Here at last is somebody real!"

Mr. Szulc is scrupulously fair to the American health and decontamination teams who, at the cost of much labor, checked the radiation hazards in the area, did away with them, and restored the physical environment to normal. Yet they do not emerge as likable people. Their devotion to duty was unquestionable, their approach to human problems detached and perfunctory. How could it be otherwise? They had



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A Usable Critic

WILLIAM TROY: Selected Essays. Edited and with an introduction by Stanley Edgar Hyman. Rutgers University Press. 314 pp. \$9.

CHARLES T. SAMUELS

Mr. Samuels teaches English at Williams College. He has written for *The Kenyon Review*, *The Yale Review*, *Commonweal* and other magazines.

While introducing William Troy, a critic who flourished in the thirties and forties, Stanley Edgar Hyman complains that ours is an Age of Epigones; but critics are less responsible for the decline than Hyman seems to think. "R. W. B. Lewis [may be] less than Matthiessen, Norman Podhoretz [may be] less than Lionel Trilling," but Saul Bellow is also less than William Faulkner; Robert Lowell less than T. S. Eliot.

When Troy was writing for several magazines including *The Nation* (to which he contributed regularly on movies as well as books), Proust had just been translated, the novels of Malraux were coming out, and *Finnegans Wake* was not yet complete. Little wonder that criticism today seems puny by contrast.

Coming from that age of great literature and seminal criticism, a figure like Troy, who wrote about seventy critical pieces and no book, is easily forgotten. Lacking the theoretical brilliance of a critic like Kenneth Burke, or even the exemplary methods of Trilling or Empson, Troy was too eclectic for easy labeling, and thus for packaging in histories of criticism. His attempts at theory, like the essay on tragedy here reprinted, were both loose and unoriginal; his most suggestive theoretical statements were likely to have been tossed off in the heat of battle, in more practical pieces. Nor was he great by virtue of extent of interest or influence: protean like Edmund Wilson, or messianic like Leavis. Yet Troy is eminently worth reviving, just as he was dangerous to forget. Because of their very distinctiveness, the methods and gifts of more famous critics have hardened into tools or commandments (Epigones are not only lesser, they are likely to be more doctrinaire). With his lucid sensibility and freedom from restrictive categories, Troy may prove a more fruitful model than those great critics who begin to seem larger than writers and have thus become distractions from literature itself.

Though Troy was not a theoretician, his criticism was informed by an intelligence so balanced that where many the-

oreticians took up positions in logical traps, Troy easily avoids them. At the very moment when scholars and critics were either treating literature like polemics or investigating ideas as if belles-lettres was a sub-category of history or philosophy (only rather effete and somewhat unreliable), Troy acknowledged both the centrality of literary ideas and their distinction from ideas in other forms:

... metaphysics is concerned with devising a picture of the world by means of the rational intellect, literature with recreating this world in the fullness and immediacy with which it appears to an individual personality. . . . The most we can say about the ideas or philosophy of an artist is that they resemble some intellectual formulations with which we are acquainted.

With this alert, refined conception, Troy can in "The Lawrence Myth" precisely delineate the ideas buried in Lawrence's work, then use them to expose the romantic death worship which subverts Lawrence's more apparent notions and, finally, the very world he wants to create:

To discard reason is to throw over the only thing that can give life definition. Lawrence's program is, in the last analysis, a program for a mystery god—but hardly for a man. And Dionysius in every age can terminate his agony only by dissolving into his native element.

On the question of form's relationship to content, which threatened to turn some 20th-century critics into secular mystics, Troy is eminently sensible. Recognizing that "the art of poetry" has always been the "maintenance of the proper harmony between the sound and the meaning of words," he falls neither into an irresponsible fixation on form (still with us in the criticism of Susan Sontag) or that exaltation of content which characterized his epoch—overtly in Marxist criticism, covertly in the disguised religiousness of the Southern critics. With strategic brilliance, he uses the poetic jottings of Paul Valéry (a culture hero for many of the interested parties) to insist that in poetry, form and content are "engaged in an intense conflict with each other, on an equal plane, to produce the poem. Or rather this conflict is itself the poem—*la forme sensible*." Armed with this subtle definition, Troy attacks the triumph of style over content in Virginia Woolf, which he rightly predicted would harm the novel's subsequent growth.

Free from that specious Philistinism which infects defenders of naturalistic fiction, Troy never embraced the obverse fetish: the "poetic" novel.

Thus, confronted with the romantic penumbra and ironic prose style of Stendhal, he can still prefer the documentary amplitude of Balzac, showing that Balzac's details are always subordinated to his grasp of truth.

Yet Troy's essay on Stendhal is perhaps his most dazzling. Combining close analysis of action with biographical, psychological and historical inferences, tactfully framed, Troy shows how Stendhal exemplifies a cultural idea, thereby exemplifying his own large sense of the meaning of literature:

Beylism is indeed as good as any other label to cover the moral and intellectual anarchy of the undefined individualism of the modern world. For actually the romantic will, as we have seen it [in Stendhal] is nothing but instinct parading as Machiavellian reason. The cult of the *Moi* becomes a cult of self-destruction the moment the individual realizes the interdependence between the sense of his own being and society. The notion of an altogether free and irresponsible individuality becomes a metaphysical conundrum if one inquires how an individual could exist without a social environment to which he may offer the resistance by which he can be measured and defined. And it may be shown that when the individual makes his instinct the sole measure not only of himself but also of the universe, as did Stendhal and many other writers of his century, he runs the risk of becoming indistinguishable from the universe—which may provide certain satisfactions but certainly destroys the possibility of individuality. In fact, he achieves a state that is indistinguishable from the state of death.

In his introduction, Hyman praises Troy for his originality, which is indeed impressive. More impressive is the enduring rightness of his judgment. He was early in analyzing *The Magic Mountain*, but it is more thrilling to see him finally realize that Mann's intellectual richness is shallow, that he is not "in the last analysis, *un homme sérieux*." His balanced dismissals of Virginia Woolf and Gertrude Stein have become standard, as has his partial retraction in Woolf's case. Honor is due Troy for being the first to recognize that "Absolution" is Fitzgerald's greatest story, but more honor is due him for recognizing it at all.

Through selfless devotion to the work at hand, Troy seldom attains the distinctive prose style of asserted personality. Nor is he notably witty. Yet when a sharp definition is needed, he can be felicitous. Thus Stendhal's heroes are "superior young men who hover about the great bonfire of love without ever wishing to approach near enough

to get burned"; Malraux's *The Royal Way* "represents an exhaustion through the imagination, a kind of vicarious purging of the mood which was the legacy of the last generation of European writers to the present"; tragedy "provides us with a means of vision for the correction of individual astigmatism by humility." It was, after all, Troy who dubbed Fitzgerald "the Authority of Failure."

Troy was perhaps too free from the contemporary emphasis on textual analysis; his one essay on poetry ("*Antony and Cleopatra: The Poetic Vision*") is distressingly casual, and he seldom peers very closely through the lens of a writer's prose. Too often, his intense regard for literature makes him ask it for salvation (but in this he merely partakes in the widespread inflation without which the age's great criticism would probably not have been possible).

He was not, either in scope or intensity, a mover and shaker. But when confronted with a text, he analyzed it with a firm sense both of its inherent meaning and of its cultural implications, in a style which expresses seriousness of commitment precisely and clearly. He was better than a seminal critic; he was a usable one. That he should have been forgotten is the mark of his achievement. In the excitement of being urged back to the text, good criticism is meant to be forgotten.

ART

MAX KOZLOFF

It invokes only one more insoluble historical puzzle to ask why Italy, after an extremely adventurous beginning in Futurism, contributed hardly a trickle to the development of 20th-century art. None of the great names, and few of the lesser ones, in our aesthetic life since Cubism, are Italian. In sympathy with the general retrenching into Classicist values, and the incipient conservatism of a "new reality" that marked the twenties, Italian painting went even further and swept itself into a deep provincialism. The stillness that presided over its forms then was almost a talisman of mental apathy. Exhaustion was camouflaged by a certain archaism. If the machine had been exalted by the Futurists as a breakthrough into a new nationalism—of the modern mind—the deals of the early *Quattrocento* substituted for it a narrow cultural nationalism in the work of their successors. Within his mold, but also providing the lone exception to it, by virtue of his incredibly modest intensity, was Giorgio Morandi

(now showing at a handsome exhibition at the Loeb and Krugier Gallery).

Despite the poverty of his colors, the single-mindedness of his theme and the physical smallness of his still lifes, Morandi's sources and references are complex. Di Chirico, of Greek origin, was enamored of Böcklin and Courbet, as well as Masaccio and Uccello. It is usually said of Morandi that he owed his greatest allegiance to Cézanne and especially Seurat. To be sure, the spirit of the latter infuses Morandi's beautiful etchings, with their delicate but pervasive gray hatchings and leafy tonal silhouettes through whose meshes a granulated light barely sieves. And in his background, there is Corot, who constructed equivalents of perceived value changes by the most precisely controlled contrasts which yet always seem bold and loose. If Corot taught everyone in this respect, Morandi's connection with him, right into this decade, is fonder and more intimate. But the real affinity shown in the Loeb exhibition is with that still obscure group of 19th-century Italian artists called the "Macchiaioli." Contemporary with the Impressionists, such men as Giovanni Fattori and Giuseppe Abbati, variously involved with the *Risorgimento*, had formulated a vision where shadows were observed as flat zones, and where vivid spots ("macchia") of local color told against the blond or drab campagna. Here the will toward illustrated sentiment, which had marred so much of Italian art a century ago, found a subtler expression in the isolation of a very few forms, and a concomitant sense of abandonment. Morandi owes more to their registration of the oppressive aspects of their surroundings, than does Edward Hopper, say, to Winslow Homer. But instead of the rootlessness and desolation of the American experience, there is, in these Italian *petits maîtres*, an environment of refuge inflected with a nostalgia for the Renaissance. Yet,

that they were so wedded to the immediate evidence of their eyes, however much they were inclined to simplify or abstract it, saved them from schematism, and worse, academicism. The most diffident yearning informs their art, in which a still-life configuration and a landscape subject crystallize into images of immobility. Perhaps some unconscious longing can be inferred in Morandi, too, since the taller of his spindly or fluted bottles, with their slightly wavering necks, resemble the old leaning towers of his native Bologna.

From all this cultural humus sprouted the most tender flower of an art, one that wears its associations so lightly because it is actually concentrated elsewhere, on only a tiny corner of existence. For in the end (as well as the beginning), there is nothing to support Morandi except his sensibility—a mode of seeing, a way of touching paint onto canvas, his counterpointed little groupings, a preference for certain colors within a very restricted range. These are the obvious features of his work, and they would never have served to bring notice, much less admiration, for his name, were it not for the muted breadth with which he invested them.

Of the earlier creations of his life, those sometimes harshly lit and highly designed flower pieces and scullery collections that relate a good deal to Carrà's *Pittura Metafisica*, there is hardly an example in the current show. This lack deprives us of a full idea of his development. But it is also true that the mood of their deliberate timelessness would have had quite a period look to it. Paradoxically, it is only when Morandi concentrates on an individual moment, his wrist tensing or relaxing in response to prerequisites of individual pressures, that a special "look" fades away. Then one knows that the goal is neither meditation nor an effect but only the realization of

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his own manner, which is indifferent to historical styles (though, of course, it constitutes a very distinct style in itself). For the reason that his process of realization is noncumulative, Morandi, in fact, cannot be said to have an observable development. It is only his virtuosity, not "progression," in any sense, that absorbs him. But it is hardly a virtuosity that wants to demonstrate itself; it is not its own reason for being. Rather, the sensations he is after are available solely through conserving energy and underplaying his hand. But the beauty of the completed work can be derived only through a knowledge that he has resources which can be underplayed. There is no sense of struggle in anything he does, but neither is there a sense of easy, self-displaying accomplishment. In this intermediate zone lie his exquisitely refined taste and his lingering pleasure.

For there can be no doubt that pleasure of an extremely rare kind, disguising itself as homeliness, motivates the spread of his thin pastes and his translucent scrubblings. Morandi is constantly edging or finding the edge, of a plate or candelabra, with a slow, slightly snipped or quivering contour that conveys a hesitation without being indecisive. Because of its infinite sequence of starts and stops, this contour makes one aware of *shape* as something precious. However plausible in itself, shape appears to be conferred on the object rather more than to belong inherently to it. Additionally, the figure-ground relationship is a reciprocally molding interaction, at least along the termination of any plane. There is a felt sense of de-

marcations mutually adjusting the paths of their shortest tangents—a phenomenon which reduces an already laconic drawing to a few creases of shadow between flattened pitchers or bowls. Within a huddled-in profile, not disturbed by the minimal differences of cylinder and cube, yet frequently set off internally by checkered alternations of light and dark, Morandi's humble objects are ceaselessly restudied.

They give off an air of being almost unwitting icons, admired for their dusty surfaces and dulled glints. Through subtle degrees of definition, which never look either summary or too particular, they are made to inhabit a closed-off ambience of their own. Almost invariably frontal in their presentation, these pepper mills and flasks are dead-pan foils for each other, accented by slight vertical tiltings, or one very gentle foreshortening. But, whether the artist brings them up close, to be examined as if under a telephoto lens, or establishes a mid-ground where they hug each other in lonely protection against the void, the very aestheticism of his processes is transmuted into a droll conversation of forms. Kettles are shown to have satellite spice boxes, or wine bottles lord it over creamers. Spigots and handles act as commalike flanges that move in obverse directions. There are also pompous symmetries that contrast ironically with the prosaic identity of the objects of which they are composed. Be they of fat and thin, or bulbous and rectangular, such contrasts are enough to remind one that Morandi is the legatee of the oldest tradition of caricature in Western art.

LOOKING OUT AT NIGHT OVER ROOFTOPS

I

*A window opens late at night.
I hear voices riding in from the horizon,
Pale bears that tumble end over end,
With hair in their eyes, blotting out the stars,
Leaving a musty odor in the night, like rain.*

II

*Which of these lights is my own,
And which has been carried by the darkness
That falls in my sleep?
I look out and see their small eyes burning
Like candles. The night-moths
Shield them with their wings.*

III

*My body turns to stillness.
Stars fall close to my skin, unable to change
The darkness. They are the inner side
Of the land, what the fingers cannot touch
Except when, through the rough skin of the night,
They touch themselves.*

PAUL ZWEIG

With the driest of affection, he seems to me an underground participant in that tradition, of which it is now hard to tell if still life is the pretext or the goal.

But the most remarkable of his strategies has to do with light and color. Light, when it does not congeal as a creamy highlight on a bottle, or is isolated by delicate but opaque slivers of shadow, is a curious bleaching element. Whatever its permutations, it behaves as a white-on-white matrix, out of which color precipitates almost reluctantly. Here, a certain optical faintness emphasizes the tangibility of the calm slides of bristle marks. One adjusts to its rarified and chalky tonalities only a little more slowly than to the full-bodied and heavily saturated hues in which modern art customarily disports itself. What is more these pale lemons, ambers, coffee browns, buffs, lavenders and diaphanous blues slightly curdled and *recherché*, relate to the primary hues the way off-white relates to white. In the sense in which they withhold, and yet imply, deeper assonant energies, they comprise a highly articulate and personal chromaticism. Fairly often, a picture can go fuzzy in this precarious domain; but when Morandi picks out an accent, he can make even the most timid of salmons resoundingly musical. At such moments, and there are happily many in the present show, his focus is so adjusted that he joins in that line of pictorial luminism (in which half-lights are liquefied with magical clarity), to which Vermeer also belonged. Here archaism, that protective mask, evaporates, giving way to a breeding fortified by matchless poetry.

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